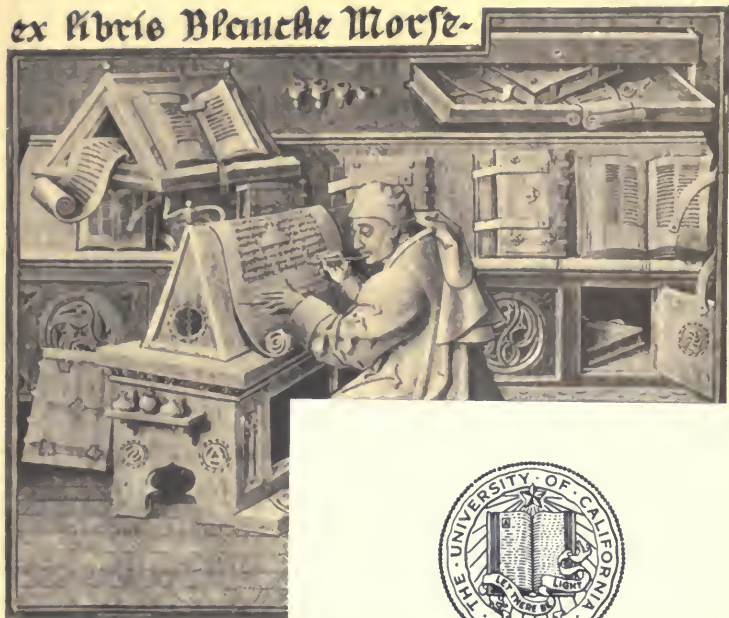


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THE DIVINE COMEDY
HELL





Brogi

DANTE ALIGHIERI.
From the bronze bust at Naples.

DANTE ALIGHIERI

THE
DIVINE COMEDY

TRANSLATED BY

C. E. WHEELER



VOLUME ONE
HELL

LONDON: J. M. DENT & SONS LTD.

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

I HAVE been enabled to increase the value of this attempt to render the *Divine Comedy* into English, by the addition of the arguments and notes from the Temple Edition. I owe this great privilege to the kindness of the distinguished editor of that edition, the Rev. Philip Wicksteed, who extends his sympathy to all attempts to do honour to Dante. The arguments and the longer notes are from his own pen; the latter are signed with his initials. The notes to the text are taken from those prepared for the Temple Edition by Dr. Oelsner with only such modifications as were necessary to adapt notes to the Italian original into notes to a particular translation. The editor of the Temple Edition is in no way responsible for any of this translation: he has only allowed me to reinforce its shortcomings with his most admirable expositions and explanations, and I desire to express here my gratitude for his kindness. My debt to his edition, however, does not end here. Its prose translations (by Mr. Carlyle, Mr. T. Okey, and Mr. Wicksteed himself) have been my court of appeal whenever I was in doubt, and have enabled me better to conceal the limitations of

my Dante scholarship. Of the many instances where my translation coincides with that given in the Temple Edition, about two-thirds are cases wherein (to the best of my belief) I have independently reached the same rendering. The remaining third are cases wherein I deliberately adopted the Temple version, as being superior to any form of words which had occurred to me, and I make here my most grateful acknowledgment of the help which it has given to me.

HELL

CANTO I

DANTE finds himself astray in a dark Wood, where he spends a night of great misery. He says that death is hardly more bitter than it is to recall what he suffered there; but that he will tell the fearful things he saw, in order that he may also tell how he found guidance, and first began to discern the real causes of all misery. He comes to a Hill; and seeing its summit already bright with the rays of the Sun, he begins to ascend it. The way to it looks quite deserted. He is met by a beautiful Leopard, which keeps distracting his attention from the Hill, and makes him turn back several times. The hour of the morning, the season, and the gay outward aspect of that animal, give him good hopes at first; but he is driven down and terrified by a Lion and a She-wolf. Virgil comes to his aid, and tells him that the Wolf lets none pass her way, but entangles and slays every one that tries to get up the mountain by the road on which she stands. He says a time will come when a swift and strong Greyhound shall clear the earth of her, and chase her into Hell. And he offers to conduct Dante by another road; to show him the eternal roots of misery and of joy, and leave him with a higher guide that will lead him up to Heaven.

Midway along the highroad of our days,
I found myself within a shadowy wood,
Where the straight path was lost in tangled ways.

Ah! had I words to tell, if any could, 4
The fierce harsh aspect that wild forest wore,
If I but think thereon my fear's renewed!

So bitter is it, Death is hardly more; 7
But to make plain the good I found,—'twere well
To say what other fate I met before.

How I came there, in truth I cannot tell; 10
Sleep lay so heavy on me in that hour,
That, dreaming, out of my true path I fell;

But when above I saw the mountain tower, 13
There where the valley ended whence had flowed
The fear, which on my heart had set its power,

I looked on high, and lo! its shoulder glowed 16
Already in the rays of that fair sun
That guides men right, wherever lies their road.

Then was the fear a little past and done, 19
Which deep within my heart-springs had endured,
That night, through which in sorrow I had won;

And like a man, by chance from death secured, 22
Who, panting, struggles from the sea to land,
Then turns to view his peril, ill assured,

So, in my mind still trembling and unmanned, 25
I turned and looked along the gloomy strait,
Where living soul can never hope to stand.

CANTO I

3

Then after resting from my wearied state, 28
Toward the desert country set my face,
So that my lower foot still bore my weight.

And now behold! e'en at the mountain's base, 31
A Leopard, covered with a spotted hide,
Nimble withal and very swift of pace,

And still before mine eyes it would abide, 34
And ever hindered so my longed-for way,
That to go backward oft I turned aside.

It was the earliest hour of rising day; 37
Now mounted up the sun, and with it were
The stars, that did as its companions stay

When Love Divine first moved these things so fair: 40
In truth that hour and gentle season's spell,
Good cause for hope to me did minister,

Facing that fierce beast with the garish fell; 43
Yet not so far but that my heart did quake
To see a lion, grim and terrible.

It moved as though my path it meant to take, 46
With head upraised and all unsated maw,
So that methought the very air did shake.

And then a wolf, hungry and gaunt I saw, 49
So lean, it seemed compact of all desire,
Well may the nations grieve beneath her law!

More heaviness of soul and terror dire 52
Possessed me than my forces could sustain,
At once I lost all hope of mounting higher,

And like to one, rejoicing o'er his gain, 55
Who meets his hour and sees his winnings fly,
While every thought renews his grief and pain;

E'en so before the restless beast was I, 58
That moving tow'rd me, nearer and more near,
Drove down where sunless shadows silent lie.

As aimlessly I roamed that desert drear, 61
Lo! suddenly a shade, whose voice was grown
Faint, through the lapse of many a silent year.

And when I saw him in that wild-wood lone, 64
"Have pity on me," then my crying ran,
"Whether as man or ghost thou mayst be known."

He spoke: "Not now, but once, I was a man, 67
"Lombards were both my parents in their right,
"And both rejoiced to name them Mantuan.

"'Neath Julius, all too late I saw the light, 70
"And lived at Rome in great Augustus' days,
"While yet the false and lying gods had might.

"Poet I was; and made my verse in praise 73
"Of that just man of Troy, Anchises' son,
"Who wandered forth from Ilion's towers ablaze.

CANTO I

5

" Why turn'st thou back to evil past and done? 76

" Why dost thou not ascend the blissful hill

" The source and cause of every joy in one? "

" O! art thou Virgil, fountain flowing still, 79

" Spreading a mighty stream to all men's sight? "

I said while awe and shame my heart did fill,

" Thou, of all other singers, pride and light! 82

" Well worth to me the love and labour true,

" That o'er thy volumes in my life unite.

" Thou art my master, and my author too; 85

" From thee alone, the noble style I gain,

" That brings me fame the world of poets through.

" Behold this beast, that would my course restrain; 88

" Save me from her, most famous of the wise,

" Who makes me tremble, every pulse and vein."

" Another pathway thou must needs devise," 91

He answered, when he saw my sorrow's tears,

" To shun the wilderness that round thee lies;

" Since this fell monster that inspires thy fears, 94

" Lets never living soul pursue this road;

" Death is the barrier her persistence rears;

" Such wickedness in her has its abode, 97

" Her foul desires are never satisfied,

" All she devours serves for new hunger's goad.

“ With many a beast she couples in her pride, 100
“ And shall—until the greyhound come, her bane,
“ And dolorously she at last has died.

“ That hero shall not strive for land or gain, 103
“ In him shall wisdom, love and valour dwell,
“ From Feltro on to Feltro he shall reign.

“ With lowly Italy ’twill then be well, 106
“ For whom Camilla died, a virgin fair,
“ And Turnus, Nisus, Euryalus fell.

“ Then shall this wolf be chased from every lair, 109
“ Until to Hell she must perforce return,
“ Whence envy loosed her to our mortal air.

“ Now therefore it were well, as I discern, 112
“ That thou should’st follow whither I shall guide,
“ And through eternal worlds the pathway learn;

“ Where thou shalt hear those cry whose hope has died,
“ And see the sorrows of the souls of old, 116
“ Who long to die again and are denied.

“ Then those more happy ones thou shalt behold, 118
“ Who hope, and so contented can endure,
“ To be at last in Heaven’s ranks enrolled.

“ There worthier than I, a soul more pure, 121
“ Must guide thee on, if still thou long to rise;
“ Parting I’ll leave thee to her guidance sure;

" For the great Lord who rules the upper skies, 124
" Since that I lived a rebel on earth's plains,
" Ever that city fair, to me denies.

" In every place He rules, but there He reigns, 127
" There is His citadel, and lofty seat;
" Happy the soul, who to His bliss attains! "

Then I to him: " O Poet, I entreat, 130
" By the great God Whom thou didst never know,
" Lest now this evil, or a worse I meet,

" The road that thou hast told me, straightway show;
" That I may see St. Peter's gate, and those 134
" So sore tormented and so full of woe."

Then he moved onward and I followed close. 136

CANTO II

END of the first day. Brief Invocation. Dante is discouraged at the outset, when he begins seriously to reflect upon what he has undertaken. That very day, his own strength had miserably failed before the Lion and the She-wolf. He bids Virgil consider well whether there be sufficient virtue in him, before committing him to so dreadful a passage. He recalls the great errands of Aeneas and of Paul, and the great results of their going to the immortal world; and, comparing himself with them, he feels his heart quail, and is ready to turn back. Virgil discerns the fear that has come over him; and in order to remove it, tells him how a blessed Spirit has descended from Heaven expressly to command the journey. On hearing this, Dante immediately casts off all pusillanimity, and at once accepts the Freedom and the Mission that are given him.

Day was departing, and the dusky light
To every earthly creature gently brought
The end of toil; I only, while I might,

Prepared me for the battle to be fought 4
Of toil and pity both; my memory
Shall trace my course again and err in nought.

Ye muses aid me! aid me, Genius high! 7
And thou, my soul, that must the story tell,
Here shall be proven thy nobility.

I spake the first: " Poet, my guide, look well, 10
" Look to my valour, if its strength may hold,
" Before I face the pathway terrible.

" I know that Silvius' father, thou hast told, 13
" Mortal, the world immortal entering,
" Moved therein as a man; we may be bold

" To think the Foe of every evil thing, 16
" Was gracious, knowing well what mighty line,
" What power imperial, from him should spring.

" No ripe intelligence can doubt the sign, 19
" For he, of queenly Rome, and all her sway
" Was chosen father, by the Will divine;

" City and Empire both, the truth to say, 22
" Being created for the holy place,
" Where rules great Peter's follower to-day.

" His journey, which thy song with praise doth trace,
" Taught him the lore, that was the instrument, 26
" Both of his victory and the papal grace.

" There too we know the chosen vessel went, 28
" That so the faith might help and strength receive,
" Which of salvation's way is argument.

" But who am I to go? Who gives me leave? 31
" For no Aeneas and no Paul am I;
" My worth not I nor any can believe.

" If I draw back, 'tis that assuredly 34
" To go seems madness; thou art wise to know
" The hidden thought that 'neath my words doth lie."

Like one whose wavering will swings to and fro, 37
Whose second thoughts change all his purpose round,
Till on his first no heed can he bestow,

E'en such a man was I on that dark ground; 40
Since, when I thought, the resolution fled,
That in my first despair I quickly found.

" If I conceive aright what thou hast said," 43
Replied the shade of that magnanimous one,
" Thy soul with cowardice is mastèrèd,

" By which full many a time are men undone, 46
" And turn from honourable deeds, and fly
" Like beasts that start at danger, where is none.

" Now will I tell thee how I came, and why 49
" Pity did first in me a foot-hold gain,
" That so thy craven fear may sink and die.

" I was 'mid souls not blessed, yet not in pain, 52
" When lo! a lady, happy and so fair
" That just to ask her bidding I was fain.

" Brighter her eyes than any star soe'er; 55
" Gently she spake to me and graciously,
" And voice and speech seemed both an angel's there.

“ ‘ Spirit of Mantua, full of courtesy, 58
“ ‘ Whose glory still about the world doth cling,
“ ‘ And while the world shall last unchanged shall be;

“ ‘ My friend, not fortune’s friend in anything, 61
“ ‘ Far in the desert wild by fear is stayed,
“ ‘ And from his journey’s end is wandering.

“ ‘ Too far, I fear, already he has strayed; 64
“ ‘ The tidings heard in Heaven have made my heart
“ ‘ To dread, lest help has been too long delayed.

“ ‘ Yet rise and aid him with thy wondrous art 67
“ ‘ Of speech, and whatsoever may be meet;
“ ‘ Save him, that so at peace I may depart.

“ ‘ Beatrice I am, who send thee and entreat: 70
“ ‘ I come from where I long to be again;
“ ‘ Love makes me parley, Love that made me fleet.

“ ‘ When I shall stand before my Lord, full fain 73
“ ‘ And oft thy praise to Him I will make known.’
“ ‘ Thereat she ceased; I spake replying then:

“ ‘ Lady of virtue by whose worth alone, 76
“ ‘ The race of men exceeds the whole content,
“ ‘ Round which the lesser sphere of heav’n is thrown;

“ ‘ Such joy thy bidding to my heart hath sent, 79
“ ‘ Obedience, were’t fulfilled, would seem too slow;
“ ‘ Say then no more whereto thy will is bent,

“ ‘ But tell me how thou couldst find strength to go, 82
“ ‘ From that free air for which thy heart doth burn,
“ ‘ Down to this centre of the earth below.’

“ ‘ Since thy desire is set this thing to learn,’ 85
“ ‘ She answered me, ‘ briefly I’ll tell thee here,
“ ‘ Wherefore it frights me not this way to turn.

“ ‘ Nothing should stir the heart to cowardly fear, 88
“ ‘ Save that which may to others harmful prove,
“ ‘ For nothing else fearworthy should appear.

“ ‘ I am so made by God in His great love, 91
“ ‘ That all this misery cannot assail,
“ ‘ Nor burning flame my soul to suffering move.

“ ‘ A gentle lady doth in heaven bewail 94
“ ‘ The evil case I bid thee now repair,
“ ‘ Stern justice she would make of no avail.

“ ‘ She summoned Lucia to hear her prayer, 97
“ ‘ “ Thy servant needs all help thou canst bestow,
“ ‘ “ And I commend him to thy tender care.”

“ ‘ Lucia, of every cruelty the foe, 100
“ ‘ Hastened to me along the Heavenly ways
“ ‘ Where I with Rachel sat, famed long ago;

“ ‘ And said: “ O Beatrice, God’s truest praise, 103
“ ‘ “ Aid thou the man who loves thee pure and whole,
“ ‘ “ Whom love of thee o’er common men doth raise.

“ “ “ Seest thou not the travail of his soul? 106

“ “ “ Lo! where he fights with death hast thou no heed,

“ “ “ Beside the stream of which no sea takes toll? ”

“ “ “ Quicker than ever in the world, men speed 109

“ “ “ To 'scape some hurt, or win some eager race,

“ “ “ I came, when thus her words confirmed the need,

“ “ “ Down from the happy sphere unto this place, 112

“ “ “ Since in thy noble words to trust, I've learned,

“ “ “ That both to thee, and those that hear, give grace.’

“ “ After she thus had spoken, straight she turned 115

“ “ Her shining eyes upon me tearfully;

“ “ So to obey more speedily I yearned.

“ “ And even as she willed I came to thee; 118

“ “ And from the beast, which on the lovely hill

“ “ Stayed thy swift climbing, thou wert saved by me.

“ “ What then is this? Why, why stay'st coldly still?

“ “ How can thy heart in such vile fear be lost? 122

“ “ Why doth not burning joy thy being fill,

“ “ To know three ladies of the heavenly host, 124

“ “ Take thought for thee within the courts of light?

“ “ And when such promised good from me thou
know'st? ”

As flowers beneath the breath of frosty night 127

Bowed down and closed, when shines again the sun,

Open full wide and stand once more upright,

So by my fainting valour strength was won; 130
Such bliss of eagerness my being filled,
That straightway was my confident speech begun;

“ O gracious lady that such succour willed! 133
“ And thou most courteous, that so soon obeyed
“ The words of truth, that all this conflict stilled!

“ Such strong desire thou hast to me conveyed, 136
“ With thy wise words, to follow where thou lead,
“ That of my first fear now, I am afraid.

“ Go thou then first, one will rules both indeed, 139
“ Thou art my guide, my master; I, thy child.”
So said I, and then following with heed,

I entered on the pathway steep and wild. 142

CANTO III

INSCRIPTION over the Gate of Hell, and the impression it produces upon Dante. Virgil takes him by the hand, and leads him in. The dismal sounds make him burst into tears. His head is quite bewildered. Upon a Dark Plain (*buia campagna*), which goes round the confines, he sees a vast multitude of spirits running behind a flag in great haste and confusion, urged on by furious wasps and hornets. These are the unhappy people, who never were alive—never awakened to take any part either in good or evil, to care for anything but themselves. They are mixed with a similar class of fallen angels. After passing through the crowd of them, the Poets come to a great River, which flows round the brim of Hell; and then descends to form the other rivers, the marshes, and the ice that we shall meet with. It is the river Acheron; and on its shore all that die under the wrath of God assemble from every country to be ferried over by the demon Charon. He makes them enter his boat by glaring on them with his burning eyes. Having seen these, and being refused a passage by Charon, Dante is suddenly stunned by a violent trembling of the ground, accompanied with wind and lightning, and falls down in a state of insensibility.

“ I am the gateway into sorrow’s land;
“ I am the gateway to unending pain;
“ I am the gateway to the nations banned.

“ Of Justice was my mighty Maker fain;
“ In me doth power omnipotent appear,
“ And primal love and wisdom without stain.

4

" Before me nought but things eternal were, 7
" And I endure to all eternity.
" Leave hope behind, O! ye who enter here."

These words in character obscure to see, 10
Above the portal of a gate I read;
" Master, these words are terrible to me,"

I said; and he, as one that comforted: 13
" Now must all thought of fear be cast away,
" Now must all cowardice in thee be dead.

" This is the place whereof I spake, where may 16
" We look upon the nations that lament,
" Whose reason's highest good is lost for aye."

With that a guiding hand to me he lent, 19
With face serene that stilled my heart somewise;
So to the world of secret things I went.

Here moans and lamentations and shrill cries, 22
Resounded through the dim and starless air,
And made my tears at once all quickly rise.

For divers tongues, speech vile beyond compare, 25
Accents of wrath and cries of agony,
Tones shrill and high, and sound of hands that tear,

All made a mighty tumult constantly, 28
Throughout that timeless place of gloom profound,
Like sand the whirlwind drives unrestingly.

Then when my brow was girt with horror round, 31
"Master," I said, "What torment do they feel
"This sorrowing people? Whence doth come this
sound?"

And he: "This wretched road is trodden still, 34
"By those sad souls of men who, every one,
"Lived out their lives, neither for good nor ill.
"With them the cowardly angels, of whom none 37
"Rebelled 'gainst God, and yet they never were
"True, but were faithful to themselves alone.

"Cast forth from Heaven lest It grow less fair, 40
"Yet may the depths of Hell receive them not,
"Lest that the wicked triumph o'er them there."

And I, "O Master, fain would I be taught, 43
"What pains them so that they lament so sore."
"Briefly," he said, "I'll tell thee whence 'tis wrought.

"Their hope of death is lost for evermore; 46
"So base to them appears this life all blind,
"That any other fate they would implore.

"No memory have they left among mankind, 49
"Mercy and Justice these alike disdain;
"Speak not of them, look, and leave them behind."

Then as I looked, I saw across the plain, 52
A whirling banner pass at such a speed,
It seemed no thought of rest could e'er restrain,

And following, a multitude indeed; 55
Methought so many ne'er by death were swayed,
Or felt his hand of power, for all his greed.

It seemed I knew some in that host arrayed, 58
And gazing saw the ghost of him full well,
Who through base fear the great denial made.

At once I understood; now could I tell. 61
These are more mean than any that are known,
To God, and to God's foes despicable.

Pitiful fools, no life was e'er their own; 64
Naked they wandered on this dismal street,
By swarms of wasps and stinging flies o'erflown;

And on their faces, scored with streaks unmeet, 67
Blood mingled with their tears, and as it fell,
Foul worms devoured it underneath their feet.

When mine eyes ceased upon their plight to dwell, 70
The margin of a mighty stream I saw,
And men thereon: "Master, I pray thee tell

"Who these may be," I said, "and what the law, 73
"That, as I see despite the light so wan,
"Compels them nearer to the flood to draw."

He answered me: "This shalt thou learn anon, 76
"When once our feet shall tread the bank, that lies
"Along this sorrowful stream of Acheron."

At that all shamefaced and with downcast eyes, 79
I said no word until we reached the shore,
Fearing my speech seemed foolish to the wise.

And lo! toward us came a boat, that bore 82
A man, white-haired with lapse of many a year:
“ Woe to you, wicked, woe, for nevermore,”

He cried, “ shall Heaven a hope to you appear. 85
“ I come to lead you to the other side,
“ To frost and endless fire and shadows drear;

“ Stand thou away, thou that hast not yet died, 88
“ Depart from these that are for ever dead! ”
But when he saw me still unmoved abide,

“ By other roads, by other gates,” he said, 91
“ Thou shalt arrive, not here, thy goal to gain,
“ For thee a swifter ship is furnishèd.”

“ Charon,” my leader said, “ thy wrath restrain, 94
“ And ask no more, for so this thing is willed,
“ Where power to do the will must aye remain.”

At this the hairy cheeks were straightway stilled 97
Of that fell pilot of the dismal sea,
Around whose eyes red flames the orbits filled.

But ah! those naked souls of misery, 100
They gnashed their teeth, the colour left each face,
When thus they heard his words of cruelty

They cursed their God, they cursed the human race,
Their parents and the day that they were born, 104
And of their first begetting, time and place.

Then drew together in a group forlorn, 106
Lamenting loud, on that wild shore that claims
All those whose hearts no fear of God have worn.

The demon Charon, with his eyes of flames, 109
Urges them on, and gathers in his sheaves;
And those that tarry with his oars he maims.

And as the breath of Autumn shakes the leaves, 112
And one by one they drop till all is bare,
And spoils of all the boughs the earth receives;

E'en so the evil race of Adam there, 115
Soul after soul, leapt at the beckon down,
As to its lure the falcon cleaves the air.

They pass away across the waters brown, 118
But ere upon the further shore they tread,
New-gathered swarms the hither margin crown.

"O son of mine," my courteous master said, 121
"All who have passed from earth beneath God's ire,
"Hither from every country must be led.

"To cross the stream they with one will aspire; 124
"God's justice spurs them on, until their mood
"Of dread is wholly turned into desire.

CANTO III

21

“ No souls of virtue cross this dolorous flood, 127
“ Therefore was Charon angered in his pride
“ Now will his words by thee be understood.”

Then as he ceased the whole dark country side 130
Trembled so sore, the memory alone
Makes me to sweat and shiver terrified;

The wretched earth uttered a windy groan, 133
A fiery lightning struck all feeling dead,
What passed around me was to me unknown,

I fell as one whom sleep hath vanquishèd. 136

CANTO IV

DANTE is roused by a heavy thunder, and finds himself on the brink of the Abyss. Not in his own strength has he crossed the dismal river. Virgil conducts him into Limbo, which is the First Circle of Hell, and contains the spirits of those who lived without Baptism or Christianity. The only pain they suffer is, that they live in the desire and without the hope of seeing God. Their sighs cause the eternal air to tremble, and there is no other audible lamentation amongst them. As Dante and Virgil go on, they reach a hemisphere of light amid the darkness, and are met by Homer and other Poets, and conducted into a Noble Castle, in which they see the most distinguished of the Heathen women, statesmen, sages, and warriors. Homer and the other Poets quit them; and they go on to a place of total darkness.

A noise of thunder thro' my stupor broke;
As one by force aroused, who sleeping lies,
I started suddenly and so awoke.

Rising erect, I looked with rested eyes, 4
Gazing intently upon all around,
The nature of the place to recognise.

In truth, upon the verge, myself I found, 7
That skirts the dolorous vale of the abyss,
Where groans eternal, thunderous, resound.

Cloudy and dark, of depths nigh fathomless, 10
My gaze, that strove to reach its utmost end,
Could nothing see of aught that therein is.

“ To this blind world, behoves us to descend,” 13
Began the poet, and his visage paled;
“ I will go first, do thou my steps attend.”

But I, who saw his face change colour, wailed; 16
“ How shall I come, when thou feel’st dread draw near,
“ Thou, hitherto my strength when doubts assailed? ”

He answered me, “ The anguish that is here, 19
“ Of all these souls, doth paint upon my face
“ That pity, which thou thinkest to be fear.

“ Come, for the length of way should speed our pace.”
Then, following, I sought the path, which there 23
Its first vast circle round the abyss doth trace.

Here no laments the listening ear must bear, 25
But gentle sighs, an endless sad refrain,
That sets a-quiver the eternal air;

For poignant sorrow, that yet knows no pain, 28
Stirs all the multitudes eternally,
Of women and of children and of men.

“ Thou dost not ask,” my Master said to me, 31
“ What are the spirits that thou see’st here;
“ Now ere thou further go, I’ll tell it thee.

" These have not sinned, yet this their merit clear 34
" Avails them nought, since baptism was denied,
" The portal of the faith thou holdest dear;

" And since ere Christ was known, they lived and died,
" No worship of true God their souls could bless, 38
" And I myself must ever here abide.

" For this default, not other wickedness, 40
" Lost are we, only to this penance wrought,
" That lacking hope, we live and long no less."

When this I learnt, grief to my heart was brought; 43
For many souls of worth I well could know,
Suspended thus in Limbo must be sought.

" Tell me my Lord, tell me my master," so 46
I straight began, that I more certainty
Of faith might have, all error to o'erthrow;

" Did never any, through his merit high, 49
" Or through another's, 'scape and so be blessed? "
Then he, who knew what 'neath my speech did lie:

" I was but newly to this state addressed, 52
" When One descend, of might supreme, I saw,
" Saw on His brows the crown of victory rest;

" He our first parent's shade from hence did draw, 55
" Abel his son, Noah who turned from sin,
" Moses, obedient, giver of the law;

" Abraham the patriarch, David the King, 58

" Israel, his father, and all sons of his,

" And with him Rachel whom he toiled to win;

" And many more; all these he brought to bliss; 61

" But know, in all the world's circumference,

" No soul of man salvation found ere this."

While yet he spoke we ceased not moving thence, 64

And all the while were passing through the wood,

The forest, say I, by the souls made dense.

Yet was the way not long from where I stood 67

When first I woke, when I a flame descried;

A hemisphere of darkness it subdued.

We were a space removèd from its side, 70

Yet not so far, but that my senses guessed,

An honoured race that station occupied:

" O thou who art and science honourest, 73

" What men are these, that thus within this place

" Are set apart, revered above the rest? "

He answered me: " These are of fame's own race; 76

" Their glory ringing through the world of men,

" Obtains from Heaven here this special grace."

He ceased; there came a voice anigh me then: 79

" All honour to the poet let us pay;

" His shade that left us is returned again."

And as the sound in silence died away, 82
I saw how four great shades came where we stood,
Whose faces' seeming was nor sad nor gay.

Thereat began to speak my Master good: 85
" Mark him who comes with sword in hand held fast,
" Leading the others as a monarch should,

" For he is Homer, poet unsurpassed, 88
" Horace the satirist, the next I tell,
" Ovid the third, and Lucan is the last.

" Since each agrees with me to share the spell, 91
" Wrought by the name which one voice sounded clear,
" They do me honour, and therein do well."

A goodly school I saw assembled here, 94
That doth o'er others like an eagle rise,
Lords of the loftiest song of mortal sphere.

They spoke apart a space before mine eyes, 97
Then turned and graciously saluted me,
Whereat my Master smiled in friendly wise.

But further far they went in courtesy, 100
To let me join their company of fame,
The sixth amid such minds as theirs to be.

So towards the light conversing fair we came, 103
And to keep silent now of all we said
Is good, as then to speak was free of blame.

At length a noble castle towered o'erhead, 106
Circled by lofty walls, seven times around,
And a fair rivulet about it led.

This we passed o'er as though 'twere solid ground; 109
Through seven gates the sages bade me go,
Till last a meadow green and fresh we found.

Therein were people with eyes grave and slow, 112
In all whose seeming dwelt authority;
Seldom they spoke, with voices mild and low.

Then to one side, apart, withdrawn were we 115
Into a place, high, open, full of light,
All folk that there were found, we thus could see,

And on the green enamel, from the height, 118
Were shown the spirits of the mighty dead,
Till exaltation filled me at the sight.

I saw Electra well accompanied, 121
I knew both Hector and Aeneas there,
And Caesar armed, with falcon eyes of dread;

Camilla and Penthesilea fair; 124
On the other hand the heir of Latium's throne
With his Lavinia a place did share;

Brutus by whom was Tarquin overthrown, 127
Cornelia, Marcia, Julia and Lucrece;
And Saladin I saw apart alone;

- Raising my eyes a little space from these, 130
I saw the master of all those that know,
Among the teachers of philosophies;
- All look to him, all bend in honour low; 133
Both Socrates and Plato saw I thus,
Before the others nearest him they go;
- He who said chance made all, Democritus, 136
Thales and Anaxagoras did I see,
Zeno, Empedocles, and Heraclitus;
- Orpheus, and Dioscorides, e'en he 139
On all the qualities of things intent,
Euclid, Diogenes and Ptolemy,
- Tully and Seneca, of life well spent, 142
Hippocrates, Avicenna and Galen,
Averrhöes who made the great comment.
- I may not strive to paint in full these men, 145
The lengthy theme so hurries on my hand,
That speech must toil behind the truth in vain.
- From six to two diminishes our band; 148
By other ways my learned leader guides,
To air that trembles, from the peaceful land,
- I reach the place wherein no light abides. 151

CANTO V

THE Second Circle, or proper commencement of Hell; and Minos, the Infernal Judge, at its entrance. It contains the souls of Carnal sinners; and their punishment consists in being driven about incessantly, in total darkness, by fierce winds. First amongst them comes Semiramis, the Babylonian queen. Dido, Cleopatra, Helena, Achilles, Paris, and a great multitude of others, pass in succession. Dante is overcome and bewildered with pity at the sight of them, when his attention is suddenly attracted to two Spirits that keep together, and seem strangely light upon the wind. He is unable to speak for some time, after finding that it is Francesca of Rimini, with her lover Paolo; and falls to the ground, as if dead, when he has heard their painful story.

So from the first great circle down I went,
And reached the next, encompassing less space,
But much more pain, that stings to loud lament.

Minos sits horrid there, with grinning face, 4
Seeks out all faults and judges great and mean;
And girds himself to name the spirits' place.

For when the wretched ill-born soul is seen 7
Before him, there it straight confesses all;
And he, who weighs the sin with judgment keen,

Sees what abode in Hell for it doth call. 10
As many times as is his tail entwined
About him, circles down the soul must fall.

All seasons many men before him find; 13
Each comes in turn his sentence to obtain,
And speaks and hears, and is swept down like wind.

"O thou, who comest to this house of pain," 16
Said Minos to me, as I met his view
A moment stopping in his great work's train;

"Look ere thou enter. Is thy faith fixed true? 19
"Let not the easy entrance here deceive."
My master answered, "Wherefore criest thou too?"

"Stay not his fated journey, but believe 22
"'Tis willed, where all the will performed can be,
"Nor ask thou more, no more thou shalt receive."

Now the lamenting notes of misery 25
Begin to reach my ears, and now I stand
Where sorrow's sound at once assaileth me.

Not any light illumines that sad land, 28
Which roars as does the tempest-stricken deep,
When winds opposing fight on either hand.

The hellish whirlwind which may never sleep, 31
Catches the spirits in its wild embrace,
Torments and lashes in its driving sweep.

When to this ruin they must set their face, 34
There burst forth shrieks and groanings and lament,
Fiercely they curse the Power Divine and Grace.

CANTO V

31

I learnt that they endured this fell torment, 37
Whom carnal sin among the damned enrolled,
Who, for their lust, their reason high forewent.

And as their wings the starling's swarm uphold 40
When thick they fly and winter frets the plain,
So drive these spirits on the storm wind cold,

Now here, now there, now up, now down again. 43
No ray of hope with them abiding stays,
Hope, not of rest, not e'en of lesser pain.

And, as the cranes that, flying, chant their lays, 46
Making their flock a long streak as they fare,
So I saw come, borne on those striving ways,

A train of shadows, all lamenting there; 49
So that; "O! Master, who are these?" I said,
"So lashed and driven by this fierce black air?"

"The first of them," thereon he answerèd, 52
"Whereof thou askest, over many lands
"An Empress ruled, in times long past and dead.

"So bound and broken she, by luxury's bands, 55
"That to remove the blame of many a deed,
"Lust was made even law in her commands;

"Semiramis is she of whom we read, 58
"She held the lands the Soldan now doth hold,
"Was wife of Ninus and did him succeed.

" Next she, to dead Sicheus false and cold, 61
" Who slew herself, by love's strong bonds held fast.
" Then Cleopatra, wanton, uncontrolled;

" Then Helen see for whom such long years past 64
" Of pain and woe: Achilles great in war,
" Who vainly combatted with love at last.

" Then Paris, Tristram—" and a thousand more 67
His finger shewed me, and his voice did name,
Whom living, Love's fierce torrent Deathward bore.

Now when these dames and knights of olden fame 70
I heard my teacher one by one display,
Pity o'erwhelmed me and bewildered shame.

" Poet," I said, " fain would I speech essay, 73
" With those two souls together constantly,
" That on the air so lightly seem to sway."

Then he, " When they draw nearer shalt thou see; 76
" Entreat them by that love that is their guide,
" And leadeth them, then will they come to thee."

Soon as the storm wind drove them tow'rd our side;
" Stoop down to us, O troubled souls, give heed, 80
" If it be not forbid," at once I cried;

As doves, to whom the nestlings call at need, 82
With open steadfast wings fly to the nest
At love's appeal; even with such a speed,

Forth from the throng that round Queen Dido pressed,
They issued, coming thro' the murky air, 86
Such power my cry of love waked in their breast.

" O! man of tenderness and kindness rare, 88
" Who comest through this night that hath no end,
" To us whose life-blood stained the earth; O were

" The King of all the universe our friend, 91
" Surely we'd pray to Him to give thee peace,
" Since ill-starred fate can such compassion send.

" Whether to hear or speak may better please 94
" Thy will, we'll speak or listen, whilst the wind
" May now a little space in silence cease.

" The land which for my birthplace was assigned, 97
" Rests on the sea, whereto the Po descendeth,
" With his attendant streams, his peace to find.

" Love, whom the gentle heart swift hearing lendeth,
" For the fair body made him long, from me 101
" Reft in such wise as still my soul offendeth.

" Love, that will nought remit of love's full fee, 103
" Such joy of him o'er all my being shed,
" It leaves me not e'en here as thou mayst see.

" And to one death, surely 'twas Love that led; 106
" Cain's circlewaits for him who quenched life's flame."
These were the words that unto us were said.

After I heard those souls of grievous shame, 109
I bowed my head and held my visage low;
Until, "What think'st thou?" Virgil's question came,

And then I spoke, replying; "Ah! to know 112
"How many pleasant thoughts, what deep desire
"Led these unto the dolorous pass of woe."

Then turned I back to them a little nigher, 115
And said, "Francesca, sorrow at thy pain,
"And pity, now to make me weep conspire;

"But in those days, when thou to sigh wert fain, 118
"What sign, ah! tell me, by Love's hand was wrought,
"That doubtful hearts might full assurance gain?"

Then she; "No greater grief could well be sought, 121
"Than to remember, desolate and drear,
"Our days of joy; well has thy Master taught.

"But since in sooth thy great desire is clear, 124
"To learn our first root of Love's fashioning,
"As one who weeps yet speaks, I'll make me here.

"We chanced one day to read for pleasuring, 127
"How love held Lancelot fast bound and chained;
"We were alone, not fearing anything,

"Oft by the pages were our eyes constrained, 130
"And oft the colour from our faces fled,
"But by one thing alone was victory gained;

" For when of that loved smile at last we read, 133

" How the great lover kissed it, he who may

" Not evermore from me be sunderèd,

" All trembling kissed my mouth,—well may I say 136

" Galeotto was the book and writer there,

" And in his page we read no more that day."

Whilst one soul spake thus of the days that were 139

The other wept so sore my senses fled,

Pity was almost like to Death to bear,

I fell, as fall the bodies of the dead. 142

CANTO VI

ON recovering his senses, Dante gazes round, and finds himself in the midst of new torments, and a new kind of sinners. During his swoon (as at the river Acheron), he has been transported, from the tempests and precipices of the Second, into the Third Circle. It is the place appointed for Epicures and Gluttons, who set their hearts upon the lowest species of sensual gratification. An unvarying, eternal storm of heavy hail, foul water, and snow, pours down upon them. They are all lying prostrate on the ground; and the three-headed monster Cerberus keeps barking over them and rending them. The shade of a citizen of Florence, who had been nicknamed Ciacco (Pig), eagerly sits up as the Poets pass; and from him Dante hears of various events that await the two parties by which the city is divided and distracted. After leaving Ciacco, the Poets have still some way to go in the disgusting circle, but notice nothing more in it. They wade on slowly in the mixture of the Shadows and the rain, talking of the great Judgment and Eternity till they find Plutus at the next descent.

When came my spirit back, that 'erst had fled
Through pity for those twain, so close of kin,
When sorrow in my soul confusion made;

New sinners and new torments for their sin,
I see, where'er I move my feet again,
And wheresoe'er I turn or look therein.

In that third circle am I, of the rain, 7
Accursed, eternal, heavy, ay! and cold;
Unchanged its law and quality remain.

Great hail and water dark and snow, behold 10
Pour down for ever from the murky sky,
And all the ground stinks, where the flood has rolled.

Cerberus most cruel and strange to human eye, 13
Howls from his triple throat as dogs howl, there
Above the wretches that submerged lie.

Greasy his beard and black, red his eyes glare, 16
His hands are set with claws, his belly wide;
He grips the souls to flay and rend and tear.

They howl like dogs as 'neath the rain they bide; 19
And, impious wretches, twist and turn about
The one side sheltering with the other side.

When Cerberus, that great worm, first spied us out, 22
He showed his tusks, his jaws he openèd,
If any limb of him were still, I doubt.

I saw my noble guide with palms outspread, 25
Take up the earth, and in great handsful shower
Within those greedy gullets gaping red.

Like to a dog that barks at feeding hour, 28
But having food grows quiet presently,
Strains, fights thenceforward only to devour;

So quieted then the squalid faces three 31
Of demon Cerberus, who thunders so
Above the souls, they gladly deaf would be.

We passed above the shadowy forms laid low 34
By the heavy rain, and felt our footsteps fall
On emptiness which seemed men's forms to show.

For lo! upon the ground there lay they all, 37
Save one, who forthwith sat upright, and stayed
To see us pass, and then began to call,

"O! thou who through this hell art now conveyed,
"Look on me, recognise me, if thou mayst, 41
"For thou wert made, before I was unmade."

I answered him, "The anguish that thou hast, 43
"Perchance withdraws thee from my memory clear,
"So that I cannot see thee in the past.

"But tell me who thou art that dwellest here, 46
"Doomed to this doleful place and punishment,
"Than which none viler is, though more severe."

Then he to me, "Thy city, where is pent 49
"Such envy that the sack doth overflow,
"In life serene to me its shelter lent.

"Thy fellow-citizens named me Ciacco; 52
"And through my fatal sin of gluttony,
"Thou see'st I languish in this rain laid low.

“ And not alone herein, as thou canst see, 55
“ For all of these did equally offend
“ And suffer equally.” No more said he.

“ Ciacco, thy distress,” I said, “ doth bend, 58
“ Even to tears my heart, but if ’tis known
“ To thee, now tell me, what shall be the end

“ Of those who dwell in that divided town? 61
“ Is any righteous there? and tell me whence
“ Was such discordant wrath amid them sown?”

And he replied, “ Long shall their mood be tense: 64
“ Then shall the woodmen, when the truce shall cease,
“ With blood and anger drive the others thence.

“ Yet within three suns must they fall, e’en these; 67
“ Fate wills the other faction shall prevail,
“ Through him who trims his sail to every breeze.

“ Long shall harsh burdens make their foes to wail, 70
“ Eating their hearts in grief and bitter shame,
“ While they hold high their heads and shall not fail.

“ Two there are just, but none give heed to them; 73
“ Envy it is and Avarice and Pride,
“ Three sparks, which set the hearts of men aflame.”

Here closed the tearful sound, and I replied, 76
“ Still do I long thou wouldest speak again,
“ Let not my prayer for knowledge be denied.

" Farinata, Tegghiaio, worthy men, 79
" Arrigo, Mosca too and Jacopo
" Of Rusticucci, who for good were fain,

" Where are they, tell me, prithee let me know, 82
" I burn to hear, if Heaven their spirits keep,
" Or if hell poisons them in depths below."

And he; " Their several sins have dragged them deep;
" Among the souls more black they have to be, 86
" There may'st thou find them if so low thou creep."

" But when our sweet world thou once more shalt see
" I pray thee call me to the minds of men; 89
" More I say not, no more I'll answer thee."

His straight eyes twisted all asquint and then 91
He looked at me a little, bent his head,
And fell, to be as the others blind again.

" He will no more awake," my leader said, 94
" Until the angel's trumpet sounds on high,
" And till the Power shall come, adverse and dread;

" Then each to his sad tomb again shall fly; 97
" Reclothed with flesh and form he then shall hear,
" Words that shall echo through eternity."

So o'er the filthy mixture passing clear, 100
Of shadows and of rain, slow journeying,
We touched a little on life's future sphere.

CANTO VI

41

For, "Master," said I, "all this suffering, 103
 "Will it increase beyond the last great day,
 "Or bide the same or be a lesser thing?"

And he to me, "What doth thy science say? 106
 "All things that nearer to perfection grow,
 "Must feel the more, both good and ill, alway.

"Though none to these accursèd may allow, 109
 "That true perfection can by them be known,
 "More near they look to be, after, than now."

We kept the road around the circle thrown, 112
 Speaking of more than I may testify;
 We came to where the steep descent was shown,

And there found Plutus, the great enemy. 115

CANTO VII

PLUTUS, the ancient god of riches, whom the Poets find on the brink of the Fourth Circle, swells with rage and astonishment when he sees them about to enter it; and succeeds in uttering some strange words. Virgil, with brief and sharp reproof, makes him collapse and fall to the ground. In this circle—divided into two halves—the Poets find two separate classes of spirits, that are coming in opposite directions, rolling large dead Weights, smiting these against one another; and then, with bitter mutual reproaches, each turning round his Weight, and rolling it backwards, till all meet and smite again, “at the other joust,” or other end of the two half-circles. It is the souls of the Prodigal and Avaricious that have this punishment. In the left semicircle, which is occupied by the avaricious, Dante notices many that are tonsured; and is told that they were once High Dignitaries of his Church, but have now grown so dim, that it would be vain to think of recognising any of them. After speaking of Fortune and the things committed to her charge, the Poets hasten across the circle to the next descent. Upon its brink they find a stream of dark water, gushing down through a cleft, which it has worn out for itself; and they accompany this water till it forms a marsh called Styx, which occupies the Fifth Circle. In this Marsh they see spirits, all muddy and naked, assailing and tearing each other. These are the souls of the Wrathful. Beneath them, and covered with the black mud, are the souls of the Gloomy-sluggish, gurgling in their throats a dismal chant. The Poets, after going a long way round the edge of the loathsome pool, come at last to the foot of a high tower.

- " Pape Satan, aleppe, Pape Satan,"
Thus the hoarse voice of Plutus sounded near,
The gentle sage, who knew all things, began
- Then for my comfort, " Herein have no fear 4
" Lest harm befall thee, for whate'er his power,
" He shall not hinder thy descending here."
- Then on that swollen visage did he lour, 7
And said; " Accursèd wolf, now silent be!
" Let the rage within thyself, thyself devour.
- " Not without cause thus downward journey we; 10
" On high 'tis willed, where Michael's glorious act
" Took vengeance on the proud adultery."
- As fall entangled, when the mast is cracked, 13
The sails, anon all swollen by the wind;
So fell that beast of cruelty compact.
- Thus went we down the fourth abyss to find, 16
Taking up more of that sad rampart where
The universe's evil is confined.
- Justice of God! What hand has gathered there 19
New toils and torments to my vision given?
Why do our wasting sins leave us so bare?
- As o'er Charybdis when the tides have striven, 22
Wave meeteth wave, and surges back again,
E'en to such dances is this people driven.

Here more than elsewhere, saw I many men, 25
And from both sides they came, and howling, they
Rolled up great weights, with all their breasts astrain;

Each smote on other, then from out the fray 28
Wheeling at once, they turned them back, and cried,
“ Why grip so fast? Why cast so wild away? ”

So on each hand, unto the further side, 31
Round the dark circle passed they all anon,
While bitter cry to bitter cry replied;

Then his half circle finished, every one 34
Wheeled round to share again the tournament.
And I, whose heart was pierced, began thereon;

“ O Master mine, make clear to my intent 37
“ What race is this. Priests are they verily
“ These tonsured ones, that on our left hand went? ”

“ Squint-eyed were one and all,” he answered me, 40
“ In mind, and this their first life made appear,
“ Since in their spending could no measure be.

“ So much their yelping voices may make clear, 43
“ When at the two points in the ring they close,
“ Where converse faults assign each group its sphere.

“ A priest is each whose head no covering shows 46
“ Of hair, both Cardinals and Popes are they,
“ In whom to utmost mastery Avarice grows.”

Then I, "O! Master, it is like I may, 49
" Among these bands, some beings recognise,
" Who with these sins were filthy in their day."

He answered me, " Here vain is thy surmise; 52
" The want of insight that once sunk them low,
" Now makes them dark to any searching eyes.

" Thus buffetting for ever they shall go, 55
" These from the grave shall rise with fists shut fast,
" And those with all their locks shorn close, I trow;

" Through giving ill and keeping ill, outcast 58
" From the bright world, and to this struggle set,
" Whereon no need there is fair words to waste.

" See now, my son, how brief a mockery yet 61
" Appear the goods longed for as Fortune's boon,
" Which in the human race such strife beget;

" Not all the gold that is beneath the moon, 64
" Or ever was, can give one moment's rest,
" To one of these tired souls or late or soon."

" Master," I said, " now further aid my quest; 67
" Who is this Fortune, whom thou hast in mind,
" That in her grip holds all the world deems best?"

And he to me, " O foolish race and blind, 70
" What ignorance is this, your course that stays!
" Hear, and my judgment of her thou shalt find.

- " The Wisdom that transcends all mortal ways, 73
" The heav'ns created, and due guides placed there, '
" That every part on every part should blaze,
.
" And light be equally shed everywhere. 76
" And likewise for all worldly splendours, He
" Ordained a general guide and minister,

" To change at times, wealth that is vanity, 79
" In ways to all mens' wisdom unrevealed,
" From one to another race and family;

" One people sinks, and one new power doth wield, 82
" Following so, unwitting, her command,
" Who, like a snake in grass, is well concealed.

" Nor can your knowledge ever understand 85
" How she provides, and judges, and doth keep
" As do the other gods, her realm in hand.

" Her never-ending changes cannot sleep, 88
" Necessity it is that gives her speed;
" So, where one sows oft doth another reap.

" This then is she, who wins of praise no meed 91
" From them who owe it, but instead is blamed
" With wrongful accusations and ill rede.

" But she is blessed, and hears not, nor is shamed, 94
" But turns her sphere, and follows out her day,
" Joyful, amid the first creations named.

“ To greater misery take we our way, . 97
“ Now sinks each star that tow’rd the height did ride
“ When I set forth, and bids us shun delay.”

We crossed the circle to the other side, 100
Above a spring whose boiling stream amain,
Pours down the cleft by its own flood worn wide.

Far darker hues than perse its waters stain; 103
And we by this strange road together went,
Following the path the dusky wave had ta’en.

This melancholy stream at its descent, 106
Makes at the foot of the grey malignant hill,
A swamp, named Styx, wherein its force is spent.

Then I, in eager gazing standing still, 109
Saw people in the marsh, with mud smeared o’er,
Naked, and seeming full of evil will.

And not alone with hands they waged their war, 112
But with their heads, and feet, and breasts, they fought,
And limb from limb with eager teeth they tore.

Said the good master, “ Son, here be thou taught 115
“ How fare the souls whom anger overcame;
“ Others there be beneath the waters caught,

“ I tell thee true, their breath betrayeth them; 118
“ The surface bubbles with their sighs, dost see?
“ Where’er thou look, thine eyes will see the same.

" Caught in the mud, they say; ' Sullen were we 121

" ' In that sweet air, glad with the sun's bright fire, '

" ' Such poisonous smoke filled us continually,

" ' Now we are sullen here, in this black mire.' 124

" They gurgle in their throats this chant to sound,

" They cannot speak a word of it entire."

Of that foul marsh an arc we circled round, 127

As 'twixt the dry bank and the slough we passed,

With eyes on those choked with its filth, and bound;

And reached the foot of a high tower at last. 130

CANTO VIII

BEFORE reaching the high tower, the Poets have observed two flame-signals rise from its summit, and another make answer at a great distance; and now they see Phlegyas, coming with angry rapidity to ferry them over. They enter his bark; and sail across the broad marsh, or Fifth Circle. On the passage, a spirit, all covered with mud, addresses Dante, and is recognised by him. It is Filippo Argenti, of the old Adimari family, who had been much noted for his ostentation, arrogance, and brutal anger. After leaving him, Dante begins to hear a sound of lamentation; and Virgil tells him that the city of Dis (Satan, Lucifer) is getting near. He looks forward, through the grim vapour; and discerns its pinnacles, red, as if they had come out of fire. Phlegyas lands them at the gates. These they find occupied by a host of fallen angels, who deny them admittance.

I tell, continuing, that ere anon
We reached the base of that high tower, our sight
Unto its summit suddenly was drawn,

Because two small flames flashed there through the
night;

4

Another gave a signal back again
So far, the eye scarce caught its distant light.

Toward the Sea of Understanding, then
I turned; "What says this? How does it reply
"The other fire? And are they made by men?"

7

And he to me; " Already may thine eye 10
" Trace o'er the waters foul what we await,
" Except marsh vapours hide it, steaming high."

No cord e'er sent a shaft with speed so great 13
Swift through the air, as then I saw appear,
A little ship that came toward us straight,

With the one pilot who its course did steer 16
Over the water, and at once he cried;
" Fell spirit, now at last art thou come here? "

" Phlegyas, Phlegyas," my lord replied, 19
" This time thou criest vainly, while we pass
" This pool alone, shall we with thee abide."

As one who learns some great deceit that has 22
Been wrought on him, and angered sore will be,
So in his gathered ire grew Phlegyas.

Into the bark my Guide went presently, 25
And bade me enter as his follower,
Laden it only seemed when bearing me.

Soon as my Guide and I had entered there, 28
The ancient prow proceeded, cutting more
The water than when others it doth bear.

Through the dead Channel as we went, before 31
My face, one filled with mire rose up to cry,
" Who art thou, ere thy time thus passing o'er? "

“ Though I be come, I do not stay,” said I, 34
“ But who art thou in all this foulness dressed? ”
“ Lo! I am one who weeps,” he made reply.

And I, “ Abide thou there, spirit unblest, 37
“ With weeping and with agony, to me
“ For all thy filth, thou well art manifest.”

Then both his hands out to the boat stretched he; 40
My wary Master thrust him straightway down,
And said; “ Away there, with the dogs like thee! ”

Then both his arms about my neck were thrown, 43
He kissed my face and said, “ Disdainful heart,
“ Blessed was she who bore thee for her son.

“ Arrogant in your world he played his part; 46
“ No good can ever make his memory fair,
“ This thought within his angry soul doth smart.

“ How many hold themselves great kings up there, 49
“ Who yet shall stand as swine in mire below,
“ And leave disgrace behind them everywhere.”

And I, “ O! Master, what a joy I'd know, 52
“ To see him plunged beneath this swill again,
“ Ere yet beyond this lake we have to go.”

And he, “ Before the other shore is plain 55
“ To sight, thy longing shall be satisfied;
“ Such a desire shall not be felt in vain.”

And soon such tearing of him, I espied, 58
Wrought by that muddy race, that for it most
I praise and still thank God; for they all cried;

“ Have at Filippo Argenti! ” and that ghost 61
Of Florence, passionate, with teeth that tore,
Turned on himself amid the warring host.

There then we left him, so I tell no more; 64
But on mine ears there struck a doleful cry,
Whence keen I searched the land that lay before.

And my good Master said, “ My son, draws nigh 67
“ The city named of Dis, where are enrolled
“ Grave citizens, a mighty company.”

And I, “ Its mosques already I behold, 70
“ O Master, in the valley, sharp and clear,
“ Red, as though round them late the fire had rolled.”

And he to me, “ E’en as thou see’st here 73
“ In this low Hell, the everlasting flame
“ Wherewith they glow, makes them all red appear.”

Within the ditches deep, nigher we came, 76
Which gird that Kingdom so disconsolate;
Methought of iron were the great walls’ frame.

Yet for a mighty circuit must we wait, 79
Before we reached a place, where loudly cried
The boatman, “ Forth ye go! here is the gate!”

More than a thousand o'er the doors I spied, 82
Rained from the heavens, and in wrath they said,
" Who is this man, who ere that he hath died,

" Thus goeth through the kingdom of the dead? " 85
Then my wise Master made a sign, as fain
He were to secret parley to be led.

Then somewhat lessened they their great disdain, 88
And said, " Come thou alone; let him who thought
" So bold to pierce this realm, depart again;

" His foolish path be by himself re-sought; 91
" Try what he can, for thou shalt tarry here,
" Who through this dark land hast the pathway
taught."

Think, reader, if discouraged then I were, 94
Or no, to hear those cursèd words, for sore
I deemed that I should turn me homeward ne'er.

" O my loved guide, that seven times and more, 97
" Hast brought me back to safety and hast won
" From perils great, that hung my pathway o'er,

" Leave me not," then I cried, " thus all undone; 100
" And if our journey farther be denied,
" Back whence we came let our swift course be run."

My lord, who led me hither, thus replied; 103
" Fear not at all, no barrier shall they make,
" The Power that sends us cannot be defied.

" But wait thou here for me; new courage take, 106
" Feed thy tired spirit with good hope and kind,
" Thee, in this sunken world, I'll ne'er forsake."

Thus goes, and leaves me here in need behind, 109
The gentle Father; doubting I remain,
For yes and no are fighting in my mind.

I could not hear what terms they might obtain, 112
Nor long he stood those wary ones before,
When all, in eager haste, rushed in again;

Thereon our enemies made fast the door 115
In my Lord's face, who must without abide,
And with slow steps he turned to me once more.

His eyes downcast he held, and speaking, sighed, 118
While every boldness from his brows had passed,
" Who hath the house of grief to me denied? "

And said to me, " Be thou not here downcast, 121
" Though I be wroth; whatever hindrance be
" Contrived within, I shall prevail at last.

" No new thing is this insolence we see; 124
" At a less secret gate 'twas once displayed,
" Which still is found unbarred eternally.

" O'er it thou saw'st the writing dark and dead, 127
" And one e'en now descends the steep this side,
" Without an escort through the circles' sped,

" By whom this land shall be set open wide." 130

CANTO IX

DANTE grows pale with fear when he sees his Guide come back from the gate, repulsed by the Demons, and disturbed in countenance. Virgil endeavours to encourage him, but in perplexed and broken words, which only increase his fear. They cannot enter the City of Lucifer in their own strength. The three Furies suddenly appear, and threaten Dante with the head of Medusa. Virgil bids him turn round; and screens him from the sight of it. The Angel, whom Virgil has been expecting, comes across the angry marsh; puts all the Demons to flight, and opens the gates. The Poets then go in, without any opposition; and they find a wide plain, all covered with burning sepulchres. It is the Sixth Circle; and in the sepulchres are punished the Heretics, with all their followers, of every sect. The Poets turn to the right hand, and go on between the flaming tombs and the high walls of the city.

That colour, which through fear my visage wore,
When of my chief's rebuff I was aware,
Swift made him change the aspect that he bore.

Like to a man who listens, stood he there 4
Intent, for far his eyesight could not speed,
Through the dense fog and through the filthy air.

" Yet it behoves us in this fight succeed," 7
He said, " if not . . . such aid was proffered us . . .
" How long meseems ere help come to our need! "

Well saw I with what care he covered thus 10
His first speech with the other following,
Which with the first was discontinuous.

Natheless his words with fear my heart did wring; 13
Perchance I drew from broken sentences
A worse significance than there did cling.

" Into this shell's abyss of miseries, 16
" Hath any ever come from the first grade,
" Where hope cut short the only penance is? "

Unto my question then, answer he made, 19
" Rarely to one of us doth it befall,
" To tread this road whereon my feet are stayed.

" True 'tis that once before I sought this wall, 22
" Conjured by fierce Erichtho, even she
" Who could men's shades back to their bodies call.

" Short time my flesh had been bereft of me, 25
" Ere through that wall she sent me, by her spell,
" To bring a soul from Judas' frozen sea.

" That is the lowest place, most dark in Hell, 28
" And furthest from the Heav'n which all enringeth,
" So be at peace, I know the roadway well.

" This swamp from which so great a stench up-
springeth, 31
" Girdeth around this burg with grief o'ercast,
" Where now, save anger, nought our entry bringeth."

And more he said that hath from memory passed, 34
For to the high tower's summit, glowing bright,
Mine eyes had drawn me then and held me fast;

Where all at once had swiftly risen upright, 37
Three hellish blood-stained furies, who were found
Women, in limb and gesture to my sight.

With greenest hydras were they girdled round, 40
Cerastes and small serpents formed the hair
Wherewith their temples terrible were bound.

And he who well did know the handmaids there 43
That serve the Queen of endless sorrow's land,
"See," said he, "how the fell Erynnēs glare!

"This is Megaera on the leftward hand, 46
"Alecto on the right wailleth distressed,
"Tisiphone the midmost of the band."

He ceased; with rending nails each tore her breast, 49
Smote with her hands and cried so loud, that I
With sudden fear close to the poet pressed.

Then looking down, they all began to cry; 52
"Medusa come and turn him into stone,
"Theseus' assault we paid unworthily."

"Turn backwards, close thine eyes, for were it shown,
"The Gorgon, and it chanced to meet thine eyes, 56
"No journey back to earth for thee were known."

So said the Master, and himself likewise 58
Turned me about, nor in my hands had faith,
But his on mine forbade my lids to rise.

Let every man, who sane perception hath, 61
Heed now the doctrine which is here concealed,
The veil of these strange verses hid beneath.

Now o'er the turbid waves aloud there pealed 64
A crash of sound, filled with a mortal dread,
Whereunder both the shores in trembling reeled.

Not otherwise than when a wind is sped, 67
Impetuous from heat's opposing sway,
That smites the forest, swift, unhinderèd;

The boughs it shatters, beats down, bears away, 70
Splendid it rolls, a cloud of dust before,
And flocks and shepherds fly while yet they may.

Mine eyes he loosed, and said, " Now send once more
" The nerve of sight, over that foam of old, 74
" There where the harshest of the smoke doth pour."

As frogs, when they their enemy behold, 76
The serpent, scatter through the water fleet,
Till on the land they squat no longer bold;

So more than a thousand ruined souls unmeet 79
I saw, who fled 'fore one, who coming there
The Stygian ferry crossed with unwet feet.

CANTO XI

59

From off his face he swept that gross thick air, 82
Moving before him oft his leftward hand,
Nor wearied seemed by any other care.

Well knowing he was one of Heaven's band, 85
I to my Master turned, who gesture made,
I should do reverence and quiet stand.

Ah! with what angry scorn he was arrayed! 88
He reached the gate and with a rod he bore
Set wide, for no resistance was essayed.

Then said he, on that ghastly threshold floor; 91
" O Heaven's outcasts! race despisèd! Why
" Doth this your insolence break out once more?

" Why do you kick against that Will, whereby 94
" Full oft more woe ye for yourselves create?
" Ne'er from its end can It be turned awry.

" What profits it to butt against high Fate? 97
" Your Cerberus, if ye take thought thereon,
" Had chin and throat flayed, being obstinate."

Back then he turned o'er that foul road anon, 100
And spake no word to us, but one seemed he,
Whom other care incites and urges on,

Than thought of those who stand before him. We 103
Moved toward the town our feet, made confident
After the angel's words of sanctity.

No warfare stayed our entrance; I intent 106
And filled with eagerness to realise
What in so sure a fortress might be pent,

Soon as I was within cast round my eyes: 109
On either hand, lo! a wide plain was found,
Filled with ill torment and great miseries.

As where the Rhone stagnates at Arles renowned, 112
Or as at Pola near to Quarnaro,
Whose waters bathe the last Italian ground,

The tombs make all the place uneven; so 115
Did they here too, where'er my vision sought,
Save that a bitterer fate they had to show.

For scattered midst the graves were flames, which
wrought 118
Upon them, to such glowing heat to bring,
No craft demands of iron to be more hot.

Upraisèd there was every covering, 121
And from them all such bitter moanings broke,
As well from wretched wounded men might spring.

And I, "O Master, whence doth come this folk 124
"Buried within these coffers, whose sad sighs
"Tell me they suffer 'neath a grievous yoke?"

And he; "The masters these of heresies, 127
"With all the followers of their sects; more great
"A burden than thou'dst deem, in each tomb lies.

" Like here with like is buried, and their fate 130

" Demands the graves should glow or more or less."

Then we, to rightward turning from the gate,

Passed, 'twixt the ramparts and the deep distress. 133

CANTO X

THE Poets go on, close by the wall of the city, with the fiery tombs on their left; and Dante, observing that the lids of these are all open, inquires if it would be possible to see the spirits contained in them. Virgil, understanding the full import and object of his question, tells him that the Epicurean Heretics are all buried in the part through which they are then passing; and that he will therefore soon have his wish gratified. Whilst they are speaking, the soul of Farinata, the great Ghibelline chief, of whom Dante has been thinking, addresses him from one of the sepulchres. Farinata was the father-in-law of Guido Cavalcanti, Dante's most intimate friend; and Cavalcante de' Cavalcanti, the father of Guido, rises up in the same sepulchre, when he hears the living voice, and looks round to see if his son is there. Amongst other things, Farinata foretells the duration of Dante's exile; and explains to him how the spirits in Hell have of themselves no knowledge concerning events that are actually passing on earth, but only of things distant, either in the past or the future.

Now by a secret path my Master goes,
Between the walls that gird the city round
And those in torment, and I follow close.

"O! highest worth, that o'er the impious ground 4
"Dost guide me, circling at thy will," I said,
"Answer, till my desires relief have found;

"The people for whose fate these tombs are made, 7
"Can they be seen? The closing stones on high
"Are raised, nor is there any guard to dread."

And he, " They shall be sealed close by and bye, 10
" When from Jehoshaphat back here they wend,
" With the bodies they have left beneath the sky.

" His followers, Epicurus here attend, 13
" And share with him a grave, who held and taught
" That with the body must the spirit end.

" Wherefore the knowledge which thou now hast sought,
" Shall quickly here be fully satisfied, 17
" As also that desire thou tellest not."

" My Lord," I said, " my heart I never hide 19
" From thee, save that too much I would not say,
" Ere now thy words a warning have supplied."

" Tuscan, who through this town of fire, thy way 22
" Living dost make with words of reverence,
" Be pleased a moment in this place to stay.

" Thy speech makes manifest thou art from thence, 25
" Born in that noble country, where may be
" I was too much a cause of great offence."

This sound arose and issued suddenly 28
From one of the coffers and thereat I drew
Near to my leader, with timidity;

And he spake to me, " Turn, what would'st thou do? "
" See Farinata there, standing upright, 32
" All from the girdle upwards, may'st thou view."

On him already I had set my sight; 34
He rose straight up, both breast and countenance,
As holding Hell in very great despite.

My guide amid the tombs made me advance 37
To him, with quick and courage-giving hand,
Saying; " Now count thy words with circumstance."

When at the foot of the tomb I took my stand, 40
He looked at me; then, almost in disdain,
" Who were thy ancestors? " he made demand.

Then I to give him all his will was fain, 43
I kept back nothing, but the whole revealed,
Whereat he raised his brows, and spake again;

" Fierce adversaries they, and unconcealed, 46
" To me and mine, and all my party spurned,
" So twice I scattered them, by flood and field."

" You scattered them," I said, " yet they returned 49
" Both once and twice, from all sides undismayed,
" That is an art your side has never learned."

Then in the opening by him rose a shade, 52
As far as to the chin, clear to the sight,
I think upon its knees it was upstayed.

Past me it looked, as though it deemed it might 55
Beside me there another comrade find,
But when was quenched its expectations' light,

Weeping it said; " If through this dungeon blind, 58
" Thou goest by height of genius of thine own,
" Where is my son, or is he fallen behind? "

" Nay," said I, " not by worth of mine alone 61
" I come; one waiting yonder guideth me,
" To whom by Guido less respect was shown."

His words, the nature of his misery, 64
These read his name in no uncertain wise,
Wherefore I answered full and readily.

Sudden he rose up straight, with piercing cries, 67
" How, say'st thou ' was ' ? lives he no more with men ?
" Does the sweet light no longer strike his eyes? "

When he perceived a hesitation then, 70
Before I found an answer and replied,
Prostrate he fell, and came not forth again.

But for that other high-souled, for whose pride 73
I stayed my course, he did not move his head,
Nor change his look at all, nor bend his side.

" And if," continuing his theme, he said, 76
" That is an art they have not learned to do,
" The thought torments me more than doth this bed.

" But ere is kindled fifty times anew, 79
" The face of her who here dominion hath,
" How hard may be that art shalt thou find too.

" But if thou fain would'st tread the earthward path
" Again, O say, why is that people yet 83
" In laws 'gainst me and mine so full of wrath? "

Then I, " The direful rout and slaughter great, 85
" That coloured red the Arbia, to this day,
" Our temple speaks thereof nor can forget."

Sighing, he shook his head, " Yet in that fray 88
" I did not stand alone," he said; " nor there
" Without a cause, moved either I, or they;

" But all alone I stood as champion, where 91
" Florence was doomed to perish and to cease,
" And I in open field defended her."

" Ah! So your seed may sometime find their peace,"
I prayed him; " From the knot that holds me tight,
" And binds my judgment, pray you give release.

" It seems your vision, if I hear aright, 97
" Perceives before, what days to come shall bring,
" But for the present is in other plight."

" Darkly, as men dim-eyed, we see the thing 100
" That is far off in time," he spake again,
" So much of light grants the All-Powerful King;

" When it draws nigh or is, then is all vain 103
" Our intellect, and save what others tell,
" We can know nothing of the world of men.

" Wherefore by this thou needst must see full well, 106
" That when the Future's gate at last shall close,
" Then of our knowledge will be rung the knell."

Then as remorse within my heart arose, 109
I said; " I pray you tell that fallen shade,
" That still his son among the living goes;

" If I was mute to the appeal he made, 112
" Make him to know I was absorbed in thought,
" Bound in the error you have loosed, and stayed."

And now my Master to recall me sought, 115
Wherefore I prayed that soul more eagerly
To tell, who there with him in pain were caught.

He said, " With more than a thousand here I lie; 118
" The second Frederick and the Cardinal
" Are here within, the others I pass by."

With that he hid himself, and I withal 121
Turned tow'rd the ancient poet, full of care,
Pondering the harm it was foretold should fall.

He moved away; then as we went from there 124
He asked of me, " Why art thou so downcast? "
Which made me readily my thoughts declare.

" What thou hast heard against thee, see thou hast 127
" Safe in thy mind." Then with uplifted hand,
The wise one said, " And hold this promise fast,

“ When thou before the tender ray shalt stand, 130
“ That streams from her, whose eyes see all that is;
“ From her thou’lt learn the way thy life is planned.”

He turned his footsteps to the left at this, 133
We shunned the wall, and tow’rd the midst did move,
Following a path that leads to the abyss,

Whose stench was loathsome e’en so far above. 136

CANTO XI

AFTER crossing the Sixth Circle, the Poets come to a rocky precipice, which separates it from the circles beneath. They find a large monument, standing on the very edge of the precipice, with an inscription indicating that it contains a heretical Pope; and are forced to take shelter behind it, on account of the fetid exhalation that is rising from the abyss. Virgil explains what kind of sinners are punished in the three circles which they have still to see; and why the Carnal, the Gluttonous, the Avaricious and Prodigal, the Wrathful and Gloomy-Sluggish, are not punished within the city of Dis. Dante then inquires how Usury offends God; and Virgil having answered him, they go on, towards the place at which a passage leads down to the Seventh Circle.

Where by great broken stones that curved around
A circle, was a mighty rampart wrought,
A yet more cruel folk by us were found.

And here because the dreadful stench we caught 4
Too much, thrown up from depths profound below,
In drawing near, shelter from it we sought

From a great monument, where written, lo! 7
I saw, "Pope Anastasius I guard,
"Who through Photinus from straight paths did go."

"Our going down we must a while retard, 10
"Till to the dismal breath our sense in th' end
"Be used, then shall we pay it small regard."

- The master thus; I said, " But do thou lend 13
" Some recompense, lest when the time is gone,
" 'Tis lost." And he; " E'en so do I intend.
- " My son, within these curving walls of stone," 16
Then he began, " are lesser circles three,
" From grade to grade, like these thou'lt leave anon.
- " With souls accursed they're filled, but that for thee
" The sight hereafter may alone suffice, 20
" Hear how and wherefore they fast bound must be.
- " Of every malice, hateful in Heaven's eyes, 22
" The aim is injury, and all such aim
" By force or fraud makes others' grief arise.
- " Since only man doth practise fraud, the shame 25
" Thereof is greater: thus more deep are sent
" The souls of fraud and more woe grieveth them.
- " The whole first circle holds the violent; 28
" But since force may be used to persons three,
" Three rings it hath distinct and different.
- " To God, to self, and to one's neighbour, see, 31
" To them and theirs, can violence be wrought,
" As clear discourse will now reveal to thee.
- " By force, can death or grievous wounds be brought
" Unto one's neighbour; fire and plundering, 35
" Or vile extortion bring his goods to nought;

- “ Whence in their diverse groups the primal ring 37
“ Torments manslayers, all who seek for gain,
“ Through fire or robbery or suffering.
- “ Next violence to themselves is shown by men, 40
“ Or to their goods, wherefore 'tis meet should be
“ I' the second ring, and there repent in vain,
- “ Who from your world by their own act should fly, 43
“ Or gambling, squander all their wealth, or moan
“ When it befits them live right joyously.
- “ And against God can violence be shown 46
“ By hearts denying, or blaspheming, or
“ Those who spurn Nature or her benison.
- “ The smallest ring thus sets its seal so sore 49
“ On those who in their hearts do God contemn,
“ And on the men of Sodom and Cahors.
- “ The fraud that gnaws the conscience with its shame,
“ Men use 'gainst those who on their loyalty rest, 53
“ Or against those who have no faith in them.
- “ This last destroys alone within the breast, 55
“ The simple bond of love by Nature made;
“ Hence in the second circle make their nest
- “ Hypocrites, flatterers, and those whose trade 58
Was magic, Simonists and cheats and thieves,
“ And pandars, barrators, each filthy grade.

- “ The other fraud, not only love deceives 61
“ Which nature makes, but love as well as this
“ Whereby a special faith is born and lives;
- “ Hence in the smallest circle, seat of Dis, 64
“ The universe’s core, eternally
“ Are wasted all who deal in treacheries.”
- And I, “ Oh, Master, clear proceeds to me 67
“ Thy discourse, and distinguisheth so well
“ This gulf, and those it holds in fealty.
- “ But those of the fat marsh, I pray thee tell, 70
“ And those the wind drives; those the rain beats
down;
“ And those whose meeting cries angrily swell,
- “ Why are they not within the flame-red town 73
“ Punished, if God is wroth with them? if not,
“ Why do they suffer underneath His frown? ”
- And he to me; “ How canst thou let thy thought 76
“ To wander thus beyond its wont and use,
“ Or is thy mind with other matters fraught?
- “ Canst thou the memory of those teachings lose, 79
“ Wherewith thy Ethics treat what doth pertain
“ To the three natures which the Heavens refuse,
- “ Incontinence, and malice, and insane 82
“ Beastliness? and how ’tis incontinence
“ Less offends God and lesser blame doth gain?

- " If well this thought thou ponder, and from thence
" Recall unto thy mind what folk these be 86
" Without, above, who expiate offence,
- " Why they are separate thou'lt surely see, 88
" From these fell sinners, why with wrath the less
" Justice divine strikes them less heavily."
- " Sun! who doth sight perturbed with healing bless,
" So thou content'st me, when thou free'st my mind,
" Knowledge and doubt bring equal happiness.
- " Yet turn thy thought some little way behind, 94
" Where saidst thou how that usury doth offend
" Goodness Divine, and so that knot unbind."
- " Philosophy," he said, " if man attend, 97
" In more than one place surely noteth how
" Nature must in her course still shape her end,
- " As doth God's Intellect and Art allow: 100
" And if what says thy Physics well thou scan,
" Ere many pages have been turned 'twill show
- " That art of yours, as far as e'er it can, 103
" Doth follow God's, as scholars do the sage;
" So as God's grandchild seems the art of man.
- " By both of these 'tis meet, (as the first page 106
" Beginning Genesis most rightly saith),
" Men should win wealth and earn their life its wage.

“ And when the usurer takes another path, 109
“ Nature and Nature’s follower he so
“ Contemns, since other hopes he clearly hath.

“ Now follow me, as here I please to go; 112
“ The Fishes quiver on the horizon’s end,
“ And all the Wain has Caurus far below,

“ And onward far must we the cliff descend. 115

CANTO XII

THE way down to the Seventh Circle commences in a wild chasm of shattered rocks. Its entrance is occupied by the Minotaur, horror of Crete, and emblem of the bloodthirsty violence and brutality that are punished below. The monster begins to gnaw himself threateningly; but Virgil directs emphatic words to him, which instantly make him plunge about in powerless fury, and leave the passage free for some time. Dante is then led down amongst loose stones, which are lying so steep that they give way under the weight of his feet. The river of Blood comes to view as they approach the bottom of the precipice. It goes round the whole of the Seventh Circle, and forms the First of its three divisions. All who have committed Violence against others are tormented in it; some being immersed to the eyebrows, some to the throat, etc., according to the different degrees of guilt; and troops of Centaurs are running along its outer bank, keeping each sinner at his proper depth. Nessus is appointed by Chiron, chief of the Centaurs, to guide Dante to the shallowest part of the river, and carry him across it. He names several of the tyrants, murderers, assassins, etc., that appear as they go along; and then repasses the river by himself to rejoin his companions.

The place whereto we came to make descent
Was Alpine rough, and no man's eyes could bear
The further cause that made me ill content.

As this side Trent the ruin lieth, where 4
Was struck Adige's river in the side,
Through earthquake, or supports that yielded there;

(For from the mountain's top, whence it did slide 7
Down to the plain, is the rock so shattered,
A road to one above it might provide;)

To such a slope the rugged cliff wall led; 10
And on the summit where the cleft began,
The infamy of Crete lay all outspread,

Which in the false cow was conceived, and when 13
He saw us, gnawed himself, and 'gan to look
As one whom inward anger wasteth. Then

My sage toward him cried; "Perchance the duke 16
"Of Athens thou dost deem thou seest here,
"Through whom thy life the world above forsook.

"Away, thou monster! now doth not appear 19
"One by thy sister taught; on he must fare
"That all your pains be to his sight made clear."

As when a bull breaks free that moment where 22
His mortal wound has been already given;
He cannot 'scape, but plunges here and there,

So did the Minotaur; that moment even 25
"Run to the pass," cried out the wary one,
"Look to thyself, whilst he by rage is driven."

So down across the broken mass of stone 28
We went, and oft it shifted 'neath my tread,
From the new weight my body laid thereon

CANTO XII

77

Musing I went, and, " Ponderest thou," he said, 31
" Perchance upon this ruin, guarded by
" That bestial wrath we did anon evade.

" I'd have thee know, the former time when I 34
" Descended down into the deeps of Hell,
" This rock had not yet fallen here to lie.

" Natheless short space, if I discern it well, 37
" Before He came, who snatched great spoil from Dis
" Of those who in the highest circle dwell,

" On every side the loathly deep abyss 40
" So trembled, that the universe methought
" Felt love, whereby as faith of some men is,

" The world oft times to chaos hath been wrought; 43
" And at that moment elsewhere and here,
" This ancient mountain was to ruin brought.

" But on the valley fix thine eyes, for near 46
" There draws the stream of blood, where boiling, see,
" All those whose violence cost others dear."

How vile and mad is blind cupidity! 49
That in the short life can incite us so,
And in th' eternal, seethe so evilly!

I saw a wide fosse bending like a bow, 52
As to complete the circuit of the plain,
E'en as before my escort made me know,

And 'twixt it and the cliff edge, lo! a train 55
Of centaurs armed with arrows, running passed,
As when on earth for hunting they were fain.

And seeing us descend, they all stood fast; 58
And from the troop, first chosen, three drew nigh,
With ready bows and javelins to cast.

And; "To what torment," did one coming cry, 61
"Move ye, descending thus our coast? From where
"Ye stand, now speak; else will I straight let fly."

My master then, "We'll make to Chiron there 64
"At hand, our answer; rashness hath ever led
"Thy will, and evil fate hath made thee share.

"That Nessus is," he touched me then and said, 67
"For Dejanira fair he died, in death
"His vengeance from himself he surely made.

"He looking downward who the centre hath, 70
"Great Chiron is, who saw Achilles grow,
"Pholus the other, who was full of wrath.

"Around the fosse in thousands charge they now, 73
"And pierce the souls who strive to hold them cleared
"From out the blood, more than their sins allow."

As those swift animals our footsteps neared, 76
Chiron took up a shaft and using then
The notch, upon his jaws put back his beard.

CANTO XII

79

" See ye not how the second of these men 79
Moves what he touches? " to the troop he said,
When his great mouth he had uncovered plain,

" Thus are not wont to do feet of the dead." 82
And my good guide, still standing at the breast
Where the two natures into one are wed,

Answered; " He lives indeed; his lonely quest 85
" I guide through all this valley shadowy;
" Not pleasure leads him, but high fate's behest.

" She, who committed this new task to me, 88
" From singing Hallelujah came; he is
" No thief, nor I a soul of knavery.

" But by that virtue, through whose graciousness 91
" I tread this wild and desperate road below,
" Give one of thine to be our guide in this,

" That where the ford is he may quickly show, 94
" And on his back may bear this mortal o'er,
" For he no spirit is, through air to go."

On his right breast turned Chiron then once more 97
And said to Nessus, " Turn and be their guide,
" And fend off any troops that threaten war."

Then with our trusty guard, along the side 100
Of that red boiling flood, we moved our ground,
Wherein the seething souls all shrilly cried,

I saw folk in it to the eyebrows drowned; 103
Said the great Centaur, " Tyrants these, no less,
" Whose souls to blood and plunder all were bound.

" Here grieve they for offences merciless; 106
" Lo! Alexander! Dionysius fell,
" Who wrought Sicilians years of dire distress;

" That brow with hair so black, look on him well, 109
" 'Tis Azzolino, and that other, fair,
" Obizzo is of Este, truth to tell

" Quenched by his stepson, in the world up there." 112
Then turned I to the poet, and he said,
" Now set him first, the second place I'll bear."

Some way beyond this place the Centaur stayed, 115
Above a folk, which even to the throat,
Out from the boiling river issuèd.

A spirit all apart he bade me note, 118
Saying, " He in God's bosom pierced the heart
" To which the Thames doth worship still devote."

Then folk I saw, who head and chest apart 121
From out the river kept, and memory
Of many of these the knowledge could impart.

Thus came the blood still shallower to be, 124
Until it covered but the feet, and there
The ford across the fosse was found for me

“ As on this side, the boiling stream doth e’er 127
“ Diminish as thou seest, I’d have thee know,”
The Centaur said, “ this other side, the stair

“ Deeper and deeper plunges down below, 130
“ Until it comes to where it joins again
“ The place where tyranny’s lament must flow.

“ Here divine justice doth torment with pain 133
“ That Attila, who was a scourge on earth;
“ Pyrrhus and Sextus; and sets free in rain

“ Tears, as its boiling milks them without dearth 136
“ From Rinier Pazzo and Corneto, who
“ Brought on the highways such fierce war to birth.”

Then back he turned and passed the river through. 139

CANTO XIII

THE Second Round, or ring, of the Seventh Circle; the dismal mystic Wood of Self-murderers. The souls of these have taken root in the ground, and become stunted trees, with withered leaves and branches; instead of fruit, producing poison. The obscene Harpies, insatiable foreboders of misery and despair, sit wailing upon them and devouring them. Pietro delle Vigne is one of the suicides; and he tells Dante what had made him destroy himself, and also in what manner the souls are converted into those uncouth trees. Their discourse is interrupted by the noise of two spirits all naked and torn, who come rushing through the dense wood, pursued by eager female hell-hounds. The first of them is Lano; the second, Jacomo da Sant' Andrea. Both had violently wasted their substance, and thereby brought themselves to an untimely end, and to this punishment. Dante finds a countryman, who, after squandering all his substance, had hanged himself; and hears him speak superstitiously about the calamities of Florence.

Nessus not yet had reached the other side,
Before we moved into a forest there,
Where was no trodden path to be descried.

The leaves, not green, but dull in colour were, 4
The boughs, not smooth, but warped and gnarled were
 seen,
And poisonous twigs, not apples, had to bear.

Wild beasts that hate the well-tilled land, between 7
Cecina and Corneto, ne'er possessed
Thickets so harsh and dense as these I ween.

Here do the loathly Harpies make their nest, 10
Who drove the Trojans from the Strophades,
With forecasts sad of future woe distressed.

Wide wings and human necks and visages 13
They have, and feathered bellies, and clawed feet;
And make lament upon the strange sad trees.

The Master good began to say; "'Tis meet, 16
"Thou shouldest know, ere farther thou art led,
"This is the second circle; 'tis complete

"When on the dreadful sand thy feet shall tread. 19
"Therefore look well; the things which thou shalt see,
"Would take away belief if they were said."

On every side wailings came back to me, 22
Yet saw I none to make them: wonder-fraught
Therefore, I stood, bewildered utterly.

He thought, I think, that in myself I thought, 25
That all these voices 'mid those trunks, proceeded
From folk who hid that we should see them not;

Wherefore the Master said; "'Twere only needed 28
"To break one shoot from any plant soe'er,
"To make the thought thou thinkest all unheeded."

Then I stretched out my hand before me there, 31
And plucked a twig from off a mighty thorn,
And its trunk cried; "Why comest thou to tear?"

Then it grew dark with blood, and 'gan to mourn 34
Again; "Why dost thou tear me so? Why hast
"No breath of pity for a soul forlorn?"

"Men were we once, now turned to trees at last, 37
"In truth thy hand a greater mercy should
"Have shown, though we were serpent souls outcast."

As when one end burns of green brands of wood, 40
The other drops, and makes a hissing sound
With air which 'scapes therefrom; so words and blood

Came forth together from the splintered wound: 43
Wherefore the twig I dropped and did abide
Rooted, as one whom terror doth confound.

"If he, O! wounded soul," my sage replied, 46
"Could have believed before the thing which he
"Till now has only in my verse descried,

"He had not stretched his hand to injure thee; 49
"The thing incredible made me propose
"To him, the deed which surely grieveth me.

"But tell him who thou wast, that when he goes 52
"Back to the world, he make thee some amend,
"Refreshing there thy fame to heal thy woes."

- And then the trunk; "Thy sweet words so befriend
" My soul, that I must speak ere you depart, 56
" Chide me not if my speech is slow to end.
- " He, am I, who the keys of Frederick's heart 58
" Held, even both, and turned them softly then,
" Locking and now unlocking, with such art,
- " That from his secrets I kept other men. 61
" Such faith in the glorious office did I bear
" That sleep and life I lost thereby, for when
- " The harlot, who from Caesar's dwelling ne'er 64
" Turned her adulterous eyes, in many a court
" The common death and vice, against me there
- " Inflamed all minds; then they, moved in this sort, 67
" Inflamed Augustus, till at length I passed
" From joyful honours to be sorrow's sport.
- " My soul, in its disdainful mood downcast, 70
" Thinking by death to 'scape disdain, made me
" Though just, unjust unto myself at last.
- " I swear by all the new roots of this tree, 73
" That never did I break at all the faith,
" Unto the Lord I honoured worthily.
- " And if back to the world e'er journeyeth 76
" Either of you, my memory restore
" That under envy's blow lies near to death."

The Poet listened, then, "If thou'dst know more," 79
He said to me, "lose not the hour, but speak,
"And ask, since he is silent as before."

Then I to him, "I pray thee, do thou seek 82
"Whate'er is meet, my need to satisfy,
"I could not, lest my heart for pity break."

Then he again, "So that the man may try 85
"Freely, the deed for which thy words have prayed,
"O prisoned spirit, may't in thy pleasure lie

"To tell us how the soul becometh stayed 88
"Bound in these knots; and tell us whether free
"From limbs like these a soul is ever made."

Thereat the trunk breathed strongly, presently 91
That wind became a voice that answered; "Brief
"Reply to your demand shall given be.

"When the fierce spirit is compelled to leave 94
"The body, whence by its own act 'tis torn,
"Then Minos bids the seventh gulf receive.

"I' the wood it falls, finding no chosen bourne; 97
"Where'er to fling it fortune may be fain,
"There doth it sprout like any grain of corn;

"From sapling to a wild plant shoots amain; 100
"The harpies feed upon its leaves, e'en so
"They give it pain and outlet for the pain.

CANTO XIII

87

“ Like other men, we for our spoils shall go, 103

“ Yet not that any should again be worn,

“ Justice denies what each away did throw;

“ Here we shall drag them, here through the forlorn

“ Wood, shall our bodies be suspended, each 107

“ By its tormented shade, on its own thorn.”

Believing we should have yet further speech, 109

We still were listening to the trunk at last,

When to our ears surprised, a noise did reach,

As when one at his post hears rushing fast 112

The boar, and all the chase, and far and wide

The branches crashing, as the beasts dart past;

And lo! two spirits on the left-ward side, 115

Naked and torn; so violently they fled,

They broke new boughs and leaves at every stride.

“ Now hasten death! ” the first cried in his dread, 118

“ O haste; ” the other seeming all too slow,

Cried, “ Lano, sure thy limbs less swiftly sped

“ At the great jousts of Toppo, long ago.” 121

Then since perchance his breath was failing, he

Beneath a bush hid himself, crouching low.

Behind them filled the wild wood presently 124

With braches black, swift and of eager will,

Like greyhounds from the leash escaping free;

They set their teeth in him who crouched there still,
And tore him limb from limb to pieces, then 128
Carried away his limbs so miserable.

My guide now took me by the hand again, 130
And led me to the bush, that still was moaning
Its broken bleeding branches all in vain.

"Jacomo de Sant' Andrea," said it, groaning, 133
"What hast thou gained by making me thy screen?
"Why for thy foul life must I be atoning?"

When stayed beside it was my Master seen, 136
He said; "Thou who through many a wound dost
strive

"With blood to breathe sad speech, who hast thou
been?"

And he to us; "O souls who thus arrive 139
"That ye this mangling all unmeet may see,
"That thus from me hath torn my leaves alive,

"Gather them to the foot of this sad tree. 142
"I was of the city which exchanged its first
"Patron for John the Baptist; wherefore he

"Will with his art forever make it curst; 145
"And did some semblance of him not remain
"Upon the bridge of Arno, e'en as erst,

"Those citizens who built it up again, 148
"When Attila had all to ashes burned,
"Would sure have had their labour all in vain.

"My house to my own gallows-tree I turned." 151

CANTO XIV

DANTE cannot go on till he has collected the scattered leaves, and restored them to that wretched shrub in which the soul of his countryman is imprisoned. He is then led by Virgil, across the remainder of the wood, to the edge of the Third Round, or ring, of the Seventh Circle. It is a naked plain of burning Sand; the place appointed for the punishment of those who have done Violence against God, against Nature, and against Nature and Art. [Canto xi. 46, etc.] The violent against God, the least numerous class, are lying supine upon the sand, and in greater torment than the rest. The violent against Nature and Art are sitting all crouched up; and the violent against Nature are moving about, in large troops, with a speed proportioned to their guilt. A slow eternal Shower of Fire is falling upon them all. Capaneus is amongst the supine, unsubdued by the flames, blaspheming with his old decisiveness and fury. After speaking with him, the poets go on, between the burning sand and the wood of self-murderers, and soon come to a crimson streamlet that gushes forth from the wood and crosses the sandy plain. Virgil here explains the origin of all the rivers and marshes of Hell.

Love of my native land my heart constraining,
I gathered all the scattered leaves, and e'en
Gave back to him, now hoarse with sad complaining.

Then to the boundary we came, between
The second circle and the third, where is
A terrible device of Justice seen.

To make the new things clear, I say but this; 7
We came unto a plain upon whose ground
No plants can live, whate'er their qualities.

The dolorous wood is as a garland round, 10
As round the wood the grievous fosse is led;
We stayed our steps at its extremest bound.

O'er all the ground a dry thick sand was shed, 13
Not fashioned otherwise than that whereon
The feet of Cato once were used to tread.

Vengeance of God, 'fore thee should every one 16
Tremble with fear, to whom it is allowed,
To read what clearly to mine eyes was shown!

I saw of naked spirits many a crowd, 19
Who all lamented very miserably,
And under diverse laws their heads seemed bowed.

Some supine on the ground were forced to be, 22
Some sitting huddled up, others again
Were forced to wander there eternally.

More numerous appeared the moving men, 25
And fewer they who lay in dark torment,
But more their tongues were loosed to cries of pain.

And falling slowly o'er the sand's extent, 28
Wide flakes of fire rained down, as snow in frost
Amid the Alps when the wind's force is spent.

CANTO XIV 91

91

Like flames which Alexander, to his cost,
Saw in the hot lands, where the Indians dwell,
Fall in unbroken flakes upon his host,

Wherefore he bade his army trample well 34
Upon the ground, to catch beneath their feet
And quench the fire as quickly as it fell;

So in this desert fell the eternal heat; 37
The sand, like tinder kindled 'neath the steel,
Did all the torment of the air repeat.

The wretched hands the suffering did reveal, 40
Dancing and dancing on, now here, now there,
Shaking away the burnings fresh they feel.

“ Master who conquerest all things soe’er,” 43
Then I began, “ Save those who would restrain
“ Us at the gate, fierce demons that they were,

"Who is that spirit great, who doth disdain
The fire methinks, who is all twisted, lying,
And seems to ripen not beneath the rain?"

46

And he himself, thereat at once espying 49
That I had asked my guide of him, cried, " Know
" E'en what I was, I am, living or dying.

" Though Jove wear out the smith, who for His blow
 " Forged the sharp thunderbolt, which wrath let fall
 " Upon me on my life's last day, and though

" He weary out the others one and all, 55
" At the black forge in Mongibello made,
" While as at Phlegra's fight of old, He call,

" ' Good Vulcan help me, give me now thine aid,' 58
" And hurl at me with all His might, thereby
" Such glad revenge shall ne'er to Him be paid."

Then spoke my leader, with such force as I 61
Had never heard him use in speaking yet:
" O Capaneus, because thy pride flames high

" Unquenched in thee, more punished is thy state, 64
" No torment like thy rage could give to thee
" Pain in proportion to thy fury great."

Then with a kinder speech he turned to me; 67
" One of the seven kings was this," he said,
" Who Thebes besieged; God seems by him to be

" Scorned as of old, and slightly valuèd, 70
" But, as I told him, his despitèful mood
" Befitteth well his breast wherein 'tis bred.

" Now follow me, and let thy heed be good, 73
" Not to set foot upon the burning sand;
" But ever keep thy pathway near the wood."

Silent we came where from the wooded land 76
A little rivulet gushed forth, and still
Its redness makes me shudder, all unmanned.

As from the Bulicame flows a rill, 79
Which 'mongst themselves the sinful women share,
So o'er the sand this ran adown the hill.

Both of the banks thereof and bottom were 82
Made out of stone, and stone too was each side,
So I perceived our passage must lie there.

" 'Mid all that I have shown, and thou descried, 85
" Since that we entered here and passed that gate,
" Whose threshold is to no man's feet denied,

" Thine eyes have nothing seen of note so great 88
" As is this present river, which hath might
" All flakes of fire about it to abate."

These were my leader's words; in eager plight 91
I prayed him there to give that food to taste,
Whereof he had bestowed the appetite.

" In midmost sea there lies a land laid waste," 94
He answered then, " Crete is it named to-day;
" The world beneath its king was once found chaste.

" A mountain standeth there called Ida, gay 97
" And bright, with leaves and brooks, 'twas once, now
grown
" Deserted like a thing that fades away.

" Rhea of old chose it to be her own, 100
" Her babe's sure cradle; and to hide him more,
" She caused loud cries his infant wail to drown.

“ A great old man stands in the mountain’s core, 103

“ Upright, his back tow’rd Damietta’s ground,

“ His eyes to Rome, as to a glass, look o’er.

“ With head made of fine gold his form is crowned,

“ Pure silver both his arms are, and his breast; 107

“ Thence to the thighs brass is he wholly found;

“ Thence downwards is he iron to the last, 109

“ Save that the right foot is of well-baked clay;

“ On this, more than on the other, doth he rest.

“ Through every part a fissure breaks its way, 112

“ Save through the gold, and tears fall dropping there,

“ Which pierce the cavern turning from the day.

“ From rock to rock down to this land they fare, 115

“ And Acheron make, and Styx, and Phlegethon;

“ Then further through this narrow cleft to where

“ There is no more descending, down they run; 118

“ They form Cocytus, nought thereof I’ll tell,

“ What pool it is, thyself shalt see anon.”

And I to him; “ If that this very rill 121

“ Its source within our world hath thus-wise found,

“ Why on this bank alone appears it still? ”

And he to me; “ Thou know’st this place is round,

“ And though thou’st leftward traversed an immense

“ Space, still descending to the lowest ground,

“Thou’st not completed the circumference; 127
“So that new sights, coming unto thy ken,
“Should bring no wonder to thy countenance.”

“O Master, where is found,” I spake again, 130
“Lethe and Phlegethon? Of one say’st nought,
“And say’st the other springeth from this rain.”

“Truly from all thy questions joy is wrought,” 133
He answered; “but the boiling river red
“Might well supply one answer thou hast sought;

“Lethe thou’lt see, far from this gulf of dread, 136
“There where to cleanse themselves, the spirits wend
“Where guilt repented of at last is shed.”

He added; “Now ’tis time we made an end 139
“Leaving the wood; take heed to follow me;
“The margins do not burn, a way they’ll lend;

“Quenched over them must all the fireflakes be.” 142

CANTO XV

THE crimson stream—whose course is straight across the ring of burning sand, towards the ring of Hell—sends forth a dark exhalation that quenches all the flames over itself and its elevated margins. Upon one of these Dante continues to follow his Guide, in silence, till they have got far from the wood, when they meet a troop of spirits coming along the sand by the side of the bank. Dante is recognised by one of them, who takes him by the skirt; and, on fixing his eyes over the baked and withered figure, he finds it is Brunetto Latini. They speak to each other with great respect and affection, recalling the past, and looking forward to the future under the pressure of separate eternities. Their colloquy has a dark background, which could not be altered; and it stands there in deep perennial warmth and beauty.

Of the hard margins, one our footsteps bears;
The smoke that rises from the stream gives shade,
And banks and water from the burning spares.

As 'twixt Wissant and Bruges the Flemings made, 4
(Fearing the flood that tow'rds them sends its tide,)
A bulwark, whence the sea's wrath might be stayed;

Or as the Paduans make by Brentas' side, 7
For villages and castles taking thought,
Ere Chiarentana feels the warmth spread wide;

E'en in such fashion were these margins wrought, 10
Although the master, whosoe'er he be,
Less height and bulk to their construction brought.

Already so far from the wood were we, 13
That had I turned about completely, yet
It's form nowise could have been seen by me,

When lo! a company of souls we met, 16
Coming hard by the edge; and as men stare
At one another, when the sun is set

And the moon is new, so each gazed at us there, 19
Sharpening his vision, as on the needle's eye
The aged tailor brings his sight to bear.

Thus marked by all that family was I; 22
Till one reached out a hand, as on I passed,
And caught my gown, and "Marvellous!" did cry.

When thus his arm was stretched to me, then fast 25
Upon his charred aspect I gazed, intent,
Till his scorched visage hindered not at last

My mind from knowing him; and then I bent 28
My face to his and answered; "Are you here?
"Master Brunetto?" in bewilderment.

And he; "Be not displeased, my son so dear, 31
"If Brunetto Latini, on thy way
"Turn back a space, and let his troop go clear."

I said to him, "For that I long and pray; 34
"Or now to sit with you my heart is fain,
"If he, with whom I go, grant that I may."

“ O Son, whoe’er an instant stays,” again 37
He said, “ a hundred years has then to lie,
“ Without defence against the fiery rain.

“ Wherefore go onward, I will follow nigh; 40
“ And afterward rejoin my comrades there,
“ Who mourn their endless doom with many a cry.”

Descend from off the bank I did not dare, 43
To go beside him, but I bent my head,
As one who goes with reverential air.

“ What leads thee hither down,” then first he said,
“ Ere thy last day? What fortune or what fate? 47
“ And who is he who shows thee where to tread? ”

“ Up there above in the clear life, of late,” 49
I answered, “ in a vale I went astray,
“ Before my age had reached its full estate;

“ I turned my back on it but yesterday; 52
“ And this one came as I sank there anew,
“ And now he leads me homeward by this way.”

And he to me, “ If thou thy star pursue, 55
“ A glorious haven shall be reached by thee,
“ If that my sight in Earth’s fair life were true;

“ And I, had death less early vanquished me, 58
“ Seeing how Heaven shows to thee such grace,
“ Would in thy work have cheered thee certainly.

- “ But that ungrateful that malignant race, 61
“ Who from Fiesole came down of old,
“ And keeps of rock and mountain many a trace,
“ Will count thee foe, for thy good deeds enrolled; 64
“ And they are right; for where sour sorbs we find,
“ The sweet fig’s fruit we look not to behold.
“ It is an old report that names them blind; 67
“ A greedy people, envious, proud they are,
“ Clean of their customs see thou keep thy mind.
“ Fortune such honour keepeth for thy star, 70
“ That both the sides will hunger for thine aid,
“ But yet the grass shall from the goat be far.
“ Let the Fiesolan beasts have litter made 73
“ E’en of themselves, and if the plant can live
“ Still ’mid their foulness, let their hand be stayed,
“ From all whence holy seed may yet revive 76
“ Of those great Romans, who remained there when
“ The nest of so great malice first did thrive.”
“ Were my desires fulfilled,” I answered then, 79
“ Surely you would not now be banished here,
“ Thus separated from the race of men;
“ For like a father’s image, kind and dear, 82
“ Is yours, fast bound in heart and memory,
“ When in the world you hour by hour made clear

- “ How man makes him eternal, and for me 85
“ Well is it, that my tongue whilst yet I live
“ Should show my thankfulness and constancy.
- “ What of my course you say, I write, to give 88
“ For comment with another text, to her
“ Who can, if to her feet I may arrive;
- “ But one thing manifest, I would there were; 91
“ While conscience chide me not, I have no fears
“ How Fortune, as she wills, may minister.
- “ No new thing is this promise to my ears; 94
“ Let Fortune turn her wheel howe’er she may,
“ And boors their mattocks through the coming years.”
- Back to the right my master turned to say, 97
The while he looked at me, “ He listens well
“ Who notes that word; ” but I no less did stay
- To speak with Ser Brunetto, and bade tell 100
The names of greatest note, if so he would,
And highest, that abode with him in Hell.
- Then he to me; “ To know of some is good, 103
“ And for the rest let silence be their share,
“ Time were too short to tell their multitude.
- “ So briefly know, all were of fame most fair, 106
“ Clerics and scholars in the world on high,
“ But fouled with one same sin they surely were.

" There Priscian 'mid the wretched crowd goes by, 109

" And Francesco d'Accorso; and if to know

" Such scurf thou'dst care, he passed before thine eye

" Who to Bacchiglione came to go 112

" From Arno, by the servants' servant sent,

" And there his wearied nerves he left. Although

" I could say more, no further time is lent 115

" For speech or journey; for from the waste of sand

" New smoke I see ascend the firmament.

" To those who come I may not join my hand; 118

" Commended be my ' Treasure ' unto thee,

" Where still I live, nought else do I demand."

With that he turned and seemed of those to be 121

Who for the green cloth at Verona run

Over the country side, and surely he

Was not like him who lost, but him who won. 124

CANTO XVI

DANTE keeps following his Guide on the same path, and has already got so far as to hear the crimson stream falling into the next circle, when another troop of spirits presents itself under the burning rain. They are the souls of men distinguished in war and council, suffering punishment for the same crime as Brunetto and his companions. Three of them, seeing Dante to be their countryman by his dress, quit the troop and run towards him, entreating him to stop. They allude to their wretched condition, as if under a sense of shame; and make their names known in order to induce him to listen to their eager inquiries. Two of them, Tegghiaio and Rusticucci, are mentioned before (Canto vi. 79): all three were noted for their talents and patriotism; and the zeal they still have for Florence suspends "their ancient wail" of torment. He answers them with great respect; and, in brief emphatic words, declares the condition of the "perverse city." Virgil then leads him to the place where the water descends; makes him unloose a cord wherewith he had girded himself; and casts it down into the abyss, on which a strange and monstrous shape comes swimming up through the dark air.

Now was I where the water down the steep
To the next circle falling, echoed loud,
Like humming round the beehives, full and deep,

When that three shades came running from a crowd, 4
Together leaving them that journeyed past,
Beneath the rain of that fierce torment cowed.

They came towards us, and each cried, "Stand fast, 7
"Since from an evil land, it doth appear
"Thou comest, by the garments which thou hast."

Ah me! what wounds I saw, by flames that sear 10
Burnt on their limbs, scorplings both old and new:
It pains me yet, remembering it here.

My teacher listened as their crying grew; 13
"Now wait," he said and turned his face to me,
"For courtesy to these is surely due;

"And if the fiery arrows that we see 16
"Rained down less densely, surely I should feel
"That haste befitted them far less than thee."

As we stood still again they made appeal, 19
Raising their former cry, and when they were
Near us, all three made of themselves a wheel.

As naked and anointed champions, ere 22
They come to blows and thrusts, will look a space
To spy a hold or vantage anywhere,

Thus wheeling each one turned on me his face, 25
So that his neck moved always contrary
To the direction where his feet did pace.

One then began, "If the soft misery 28
"Of this place and our aspect scorched and stained,
"Contempt for us and for our prayers supply,

" Yet by our fame be now thy will constrained 31
" To tell us who thou art, whose living feet
" So sure a path through hell have now attained.

" Though flayed and naked is he all unmeet, 34
" He, in whose footsteps thou dost see me go,
" Yet higher than thou deem'st was once his seat;

" In him the good Gualdrada's grandson know, 37
" E'en Guido Guerra, and ere he was dead
" His sword and counsel caused his fame to grow.

" He who behind me o'er the sand doth tread, 40
" Is Tegghiaio Aldobrand'; for whom
" Should fame about a grateful world be spread,

" And I who with them on this cross consume, 43
" Jacopo Rusticucci was; I blame
" My savage wife in chief for this my doom."

Had I been sheltered from the hail of flame, 46
I had leaped down: I think my teacher dear
Would have allowed me what my love did claim.

But since I knew the fire would scorch and sear, 49
The great desire that made me greedy there
To clasp them, failed before my shrinking fear.

" Sorrow," I said, " and not contempt soe'er, 52
" Your plight had fixed in me so deep and fast,
" That long 'twill be ere this from memory wear,

“ As soon as from my lord the signal passed, 55
“ By which I deemed that beings such as ye,
“ Toward us might be coming at the last.

“ I of your city am, and e’en by me, 58
“ The honoured names and all the deeds of you,
“ Have been both said and heard most lovingly.

“ I leave the gall and, journeying, pursue 61
“ The apples sweet, promised by my true guide;
“ But first to fall to the centre is my due.”

“ So may thy soul long in thy limbs abide, 64
“ To lead them,” answered he, “ and so from hence
“ Thy fame shine after thee, full far and wide,

“ Say now if courtesy and valiance 67
“ Dwell in our city as they used of old,
“ Or if entirely they have vanished thence?

“ For Guglielmo Borsier’, enrolled 70
“ But late, who goes there with the rest in pain,
“ Torments us sore with certain news he told.”

“ The upstart people, and the sudden gain, 73
“ O Florence, breed in thee excess and pride,
“ Whence to lament thou art already fain.”

So cried I, and the three men as I cried 76
Looked at each other, as men do who hear
The truth, perceiving how I had replied.

" If thou dost never find it cost more dear 79
" For satisfying others, thou art blest,"
They said, " if thus thou speakest prompt and clear.

" Wherefore, if from these regions sore oppressed 82
" Thou 'scape, and see the lovely stars again,
" When that to say, ' I was,' shall please thee best,

" See that thou speak of us to other men," 85
With this they broke their wheel, and as they fled
Their nimble legs seemed swift as wings astrain.

Amen could not by any means be said 88
As quickly as they vanished; well content
My master was now on our way to tread.

I followed him; short space therefrom we went 91
Before so near us was the water's sound,
Scant hearing to our speech would have been lent.

As doth the stream, (which its own way hath found 94
First from Mount Veso tow'rd the east to move,
On the left flank of Apenninean ground,

Which Acquacheta has for name above, 97
Before to its low bed it must descend,
To be at Forli then bereft thereof),

Its echoes backwards from the mountain send 100
Above San Benedetto, falling sheer,
Where safety might a thousand men befriend;

CANTO XVI

107

So down a cliff precipitous anear, 103
 We found that water dark resounding pour,
 Till in a little 'twould have stunned the ear.

Girded about me still a cord I wore, 106
 And with it sometime I had thought to bind"
 The Leopard with the hide all painted o'er;

This from my body now I did unwind, 109
 E'en as command came from my guide to me,
 And gave it coiled and gathered to his mind.

Then to the right side turned he presently, 112
 And distant somewhat from the edge, he threw
 It down the steep abyss, "In certainty,"

I said within myself, "will something new 115
 "Answer to this new signal, strangely wrought,
 "Which my guide follows with such eager view."

Ah me, what caution should from men be sought 118
 Near those who look not only on the deed,
 But with their mind see through into the thought!

He said to me, "Soon what I wait will speed 121
 "Up from below, and what thy thought doth dream,
 "Soon will be ready for thy sight to heed."

From any truth that like a lie may seem, 124
 A man should ever guard his lips, for fear,
 All undeserved, men should pour scorn on him:

Yet cannot silence be my portion here; 127
But so a lasting favour may endure,
Reader, by this my comedy I swear

I saw, there through that air thick and obscure, 130
A form come swimming up, whose sight revealed
A marvel to all hearts steadfast and sure;

As one returns, who hath dived down to yield 133
Help to the anchor, caught perchance complete
On rock or other thing by sea concealed,

Who spreads his arms and gathers up his feet. 136

CANTO XVII

THE monster Geryon is described; and the Poets leave the rocky margin of the streamlet, and go down, on the right hand, to the place where he has landed himself. Virgil remains with him, and sends Dante, by himself alone (not without significance), to see the last class or sinners that are punished on the burning sand,—the Usurers who have done Violence to Nature and Art. Canto, xi. 94, etc. They are sitting all crouched up, tears gushing from their eyes; and each of them has a Purse, stamped with armorial bearings, hanging from his neck. Dante looks into the faces of some; but finds it quite impossible to recognise any one of them. He briefly examines their condition, in the way of duty; listens to a few words that make him understand it completely; and then turns away without speaking at all to them. He goes back to his Guide; and Geryon conveys them down to the Eighth Circle.

“Behold the monster with the pointed tail,
“Who walls and weapons breaks, whom mountains
high
“Stay not; whose stench makes all the world to ail.”

So 'gan my leader, speaking presently, 4
And beckoned him that he should come to shore,
There where the rocky path ended, hard by.

And the foul effigy of Fraud, the more 7
Drew near, and breast and head he brought to land,
But to the bank drew not the tail he bore.

His face was like a just man's, all so bland 10
The outward aspect was which he did wear,
And as a reptile all the rest was planned.

The forelegs to the armpits thick with hair 13
He had, and back, and breast, and flanks displayed
Both painted knots and painted circles there.

Never by Turk or Tartar cloth was made 16
With more of hues, in ground or broidery,
Nor on Arachne's loom were such webs laid;

And as at times ashore the wherries lie, 19
That half on land and half in water are,
And as 'midst gluttonous Germans, craftily

The beaver sets himself to wage his war, 22
So lay that worst of monsters, balancing
Upon the stone that was the sand waste's bar;

And in the void his tail was quivering, 25
And twisting up the fork so venomous,
That as in scorpions carried the sting.

My leader said, " Our need demands of us 28
" Our steps a little tow'rd the beast to bend,
" That couches there so vile and dangerous."

Then on the right hand side did we descend, 31
And tow'rd the edge ten paces did we veer,
From sand and flames our passage to defend.

CANTO XVII

III

And when we came to him I saw appear 34
Some folk, who sat a little further thence
Upon the sand, the yawning space anear.

My master then, "That thy experience 37
"Of all this circle may be filled thereby,
"Now go, and of their state have evidence.

“ Brief be thy parley with them; meantime I 40
“ Will reason with this beast whilst here I wait,
“ That his strong shoulders may our need supply.”

So on the utmost verge that bindeth strait 43
The seventh circle, all alone I went,
Where sat that people most disconsolate.

Out from their eyes burst forth their deep lament, 46
Now from the flames, now from the burning ground,
Now here, now there, their warding hands they sent.

Not otherwise are dogs in summer found, 49
Using now snout, now paw, when bitten sore
By fleas or flies or midges that abound.

When I had looked some of the faces o'er 52
On which the dolorous fire falls ever, none
There did I know, but saw that each one wore

Hung from his neck, a pouch, and lo! each one 55
A certain colour had and token too;
Their eyes seemed never tired to feed thereon.

And as my path 'mid them I did pursue, 58
Upon a yellow purse, was seen by me
A lion's face and form of azure hue.

Then glancing further saw I presently, 61
Another of them, where on ground blood red,
A goose more white than butter seemed to be.

One on whose sacklet, silver white, did tread 64
An azure pregnant sow, looked at me, till
"What dost thou in this pit?" at last he said.

"Now get thee hence, and since thou'rt living still, 67
"Learn that Vitaliamo, neighbour dear,
"Shall come the place at my left side to fill.

"A Paduan I, these Florentines so near, 70
"Oft do they deafen me by crying close,
"Wait till there come the sovereign cavalier,

"Who on his purse three goats for token shows." 73
Thereat he writhed his mouth, thrust forth his tongue,
In semblance of an ox that licks its nose.

And I, who feared lest should I stay too long 76
I'd anger him who bade short stay to be,
Bided no more those wearied souls among.

My guide already mounted, did I see, 79
Upon the croup of that dread animal;
"Now be thou strong and bold," he said to me,

“ For by such stairs must our descent befall; 82
“ Mount thou in front, while in the midst I’m stayed,
“ So that the tail shall harm thee not at all.”

As when the shivering by the quartan made 85
Cometh so near, the nails are almost dead,
And the man trembles just to see the shade;

So I became, when that these words were said; 88
But shame he roused in me, such as makes bold
The servant by a worthy master led.

On those huge shoulders then I took my hold; 91
I wished to say (but other than I thought
The voice came), “ Let thine arms clasp and enfold.”

But he who other times my aid had wrought 94
In other perils, soon as I mounted there,
Clasped with his arms and held me closely caught,

And said, “ Now, Geryon, onward and beware! 97
“ Large be thy circlings, gradual thy descent,
“ Remember the strange burden thou dost bear.”

As goes the ship from out its station sent 100
Backwards and backwards, so he moved I ween,
And when he knew that wholly free he went,

He turned his breast where late his tail had been, 103
And stretching moved it, like as doth the eel,
While his paws gathered in the air between.

No greater fear was known, I surely feel, 106
When Phaeton let loose the reins, whereby
The heav'ns were burnt, as still they bear the seal;

Nor when poor Icarus felt in the sky, 109
The melting wax his loins unfeathering,
While, "An ill road thou goest;" his sire must cry;

Than was the fear that on my heart did spring, 112
Myself with air on every side to know,
And save of the beast no sight of anything.

On goes he swimming slowly, ah! so slow, 115
Wheels and descends, but nought my senses plies,
Save on my face a wind, and from below

I hear the whirlpool, on our right it lies, 118
Making beneath us far a hideous roar,
Whereat I stretch my neck, with downbent eyes.

Then to dismount my fear was even more, 121
For loud laments I heard and saw fires sheen,
So that I cowered and trembled very sore.

And then I saw, (through the great evils seen 124
On every side,) what I had missed till then,
How great the wheeling and descent had been.

And as the falcon on the wing in vain, 127
(That seeing neither bird nor any lure,
Makes its lord say, "Ah! dost thou stoop again!")

Weary descends; then moves him swift and sure 130
Through hundred circles, and anon will go
Far from its master's hand, sullen and dour;

So Geryon, circling to the depth below, 133
Us to the broken crag's dark foot did bring;
Then, when our weight he did no longer know,

Shot off as does the arrow from the string. 136

CANTO XVIII

DURING the "circling and sinking," on the back of Geryon, Dante has observed the outlines of the lowest Hell, and here briefly describes them. He is now far beneath the circles of Violence, etc.; and has to see the punishment of far graver sins. Everything around him is made of dark solid rock. The high wall of the great circular shaft, in which he has descended with Geryon, forms the outer barrier of the Eighth Circle, where he and his Guide have just been landed. The circle itself occupies the whole of a shelving space, which lies between the foot of the high wall and the brim of another (lower) shaft or "well" that is exactly in the centre; and it is divided (in successive rings) into ten deep fosses or chasms, resembling the trenches which begird a fortress, and each containing a different class of sinners. Across these chasms, and the banks which separate them from one another, run cliffs from the outer border of the circle down to the central well, forming lines of roads and bridges that also resemble those by which a fortress is entered from different sides. The well contains the Traitors, and Satan, "Emperor of the dolorous kingdom," in the middle of them. Virgil turns to the left, and conducts Dante along the outer edge of the first chasm, till they come to one of the cliffs. This they ascend; and, turning to the right, pass two of the bridges, and examine the chasms beneath them. In the First are Panders (*Ruffiani*) and lying Seducers, hurrying along in two separate crowds—meeting one another—all naked and scourged by Horned Demons. In the Second, Flatterers immersed in filth.

A place named Malebolge lies in Hell,
Like iron coloured, and made all of stone,
As is the barrier wound about it well.

Midmost of that malignant field doth yawn 4
A well full broad and deep; what is pertaining
Thereto, I'll tell in its own place anon.

Therefore the circuit 'twixt the well remaining 7
And the high cliff of rock is wholly round:
Ten separate valleys is its space containing.

As is the form presented by that ground, 10
Where, to defend a castle's outer wall,
Fosse after fosse is in succession found,

Such semblance these made here, and as there fall 13
Down, from such fortress thresholds, bridges
To give a passage outward o'er them all;

So from the bottom of the cliff, rock-ridges 16
Go, o'er each fosse and o'er each battlement,
Down to the well which gathers and abridges.

From Geryon's back thrown, after his descent, 19
Here did we find ourselves; the Poet then
Held to the left and I behind him went.

On my right hand I saw new woes again, 22
New torments and new torturers, that so
The first great chasm was fulfilled of pain.

Naked along its depth the sinners go; 25
On our side of the middle, facing us,
On the other, with us, but with steps less slow;

I' the year of Jubilee, the Romans thus 28
To let folk pass upon the bridge, have tried,
Because the throngs are dense and numerous;

So all the people face upon one side 31
Towards the Castle, for St. Peter's bound,
While on the other, tow'rd the Mount they stride.

Here and beyond, on the dark stony ground, 34
I saw horned demons with great scourges run,
Who smote them from behind and sore did wound.

Ah! how they made them lift their legs, each one 37
At the first strokes; for second or for third
Indeed amid that throng there waited none.

As I passed on, one met mine eyes and stirred 40
My memory; " This one I've seen ere now; "
Thus instantly my lips shaped forth the word.

I stayed my feet to let my knowledge grow, 43
And my dear Guide himself stood still with me,
And e'en some paces backward did allow.

And the scourged soul thought that concealed he'd be,
Holding his face down; little it availed, 47
I said; " O thou whose downcast look I see,

" Unless with features false thy face is veiled, 49
" Thou'rt Venedico Caccianimico;
" Why with such biting salts art thou assailed? "

And he to me; " My will to tell't is slow, 52
" But thy clear speech, that memory wakes again
" Of the ancient world, compels the words to flow.

" 'Twas I who led the fair Ghisola then 55
" To do the marquis's will, howe'er is brought
" The tale unseemly to the ears of men.

" Nor am I here alone lamenting caught 58
" Out of Bologna; nay so many we
" Are here, to fewer tongues is ' sipa ' taught,

" 'Twixt Remo and Savena, than we be; 61
" If lacking witness thou should'st faith withhold,
" Recall our avaricious hearts to thee."

And as he spoke, a demon now behold 64
Sore lashed him, crying; " Pander, get thee hence,
" Here are no women to be coined to gold! "

My escort I rejoined, and few steps thence 67
Proceeding, reached a cliff that there doth spring
Out from the bank which makes the circle's fence.

Thereon we climbed with little labouring, 70
And on its ridgy summit to the right
Turning, we trod no more the eternal ring.

When we were come, where for the scourged ones'
flight 73
To pass beneath, the rock yawns, hollowed through,
My leader said, " Stay now, and let the sight

- " Of all these ill-born others meet thy view, 76
" For since along with us their path they've traced,
" Their faces to thine eyes as yet are new."
- Upon the ancient bridge the train we faced, 79
Who came toward us on the other hand,
And like the others by the scourge were chased.
- My Master good, though I made no demand, 82
Said to me, " See that great soul drawing near,
" Who scorns to shed a tear at pain's command;
- " What royal aspect he retains e'en here! 85
" Jason he is, whose courage and whose brain
" Captured the ram the Colchians counted dear.
- " By Lemnos' isle his journey took him, when 88
" The fierce and ruthless women of that place
" Had given up to death all of their men.
- " With tokens then and words of ornate grace, 91
" He did deceive the young Hypsipyle,
" Who erst deceived the rest of all her race.
- " Pregnant, he left her all forsakenly; 94
" Such guilt exacts such torment; further still
" Through this Medea comes avenged to be.
- " With him go all who like deceit fulfil; 97
" And here enough be given thee to know
" Of the first vale and its devouring will."

Now were we where the narrow path doth go 100
Across the second bank, and makes of it
A buttress whence another arch may grow.

Here folk we heard within the other pit, 103
Whining and puffing through their nostrils, or
Striking themselves with palms that swiftly beat.

Both of the banks with mould were crusted o'er, 106
Which thickens from the vapours rising high,
And on both eyes and nose declareth war.

So deep the lowest depth it 'scaped the eye, 109
Except, the archway's ridge climbing, we sought
The highest point that on the cliff doth lie.

There came we, and I saw a people caught 112
Down in the fosse, immersed in excrement,
That seemed as though from human privies brought.

And whilst to search down there I was intent, 115
I saw a head so smeared with filth, I recked
Not if 'twere clerk or layman thus forespent.

He yelled at me; " Why dost thou then elect 118
" To see me, more than others filthy too? "
And I; " Because if well I recollect,

" In Lucca, with dry hair thy head I knew. 121
" Alessio Interminei art thou,
" Whence more than all the rest thou hold'st my view."

"Down here"—thereon he beat upon his brow, 124
And said; "have plunged me deep the flatteries,
"Of which my tongue could never speak enow."

Thereon to me; "Now forward bend somewise 127
"Thy head;" my leader gave command; "Have care
"To let the face more fully meet thine eyes,

"Of that unclean dishevelled harlot there, 130
"Now standing on her feet, now crouching low,
"Who with her filthy nails doth scratch and tear.

"Thais, the courtesan, is she I show; 133
"Who when her lover asked her, 'Do I gain
"Great thanks from thee?' said, 'Marvellous I
 trow.'

"And let our sight therewith enough attain." 136

CANTO XIX

In the Third Chasm are the Simonists. The heart of Dante seems almost too full for utterance when he comes in sight of them. To him they are, as it were, a more hateful species of panders and seducers than those he has just left; and they lie beneath the vile flatterers "that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness." It is they who have prostituted the things of God for gold and silver, and made "His house a den of thieves." They are all fixed one by one in narrow round holes, along the sides and bottom of the rock, with the head downwards, so that nothing more than the feet and part of the legs stands out. The soles of them are tormented with flames, which keep flickering from the heels to the toes, and burn with a brightness and intensity proportioned to the different degrees of guilt. Dante is carried down by his Guide to the bottom of the chasm; and there finds Pope Nicholas the Third, who, with a weeping voice, declares his own evil ways, and those of his successors Boniface the Eighth and Clement the Fifth. The Poet answers with a sorrow and indignation proportionate to his reverence for the Mystic Keys, speaking as if under the pressure of it. Virgil then lifts him up again, and lightly carries him to the rough summit of the arch which forms a passage over the next chasm.

O Simon Magus! O ye wretched fruit
Of his ill deed, ye robbers! all of ye
Who to win gold and silver, prostitute

The things of God, that wedded ought to be
To righteousness, now sounds the trumpet blast
For you within the third fosse found by me!

To the next grave already had we passed, 7
Mounting upon the cliff just where 'tis thrown
Across the mid-most of the chasm vast.

O Highest Wisdom! How Thy Power is shown 10
In heav'n, on earth, and in the world of shame,
And with what justice is Thy worth made known!

There I saw rounded holes, set in the frame 13
Of livid stone; all were of equal size,
The depth and both the sides were full of them.

Nor less nor more in width they struck mine eyes, 16
Than those found in my beautiful St. John,
Fashioned as stands for them that do baptize;

One of which not so many years ago, 19
(May this a seal be, showing truth to all,)
I broke, to save thereby a drowning one.

Out from the mouth of each, a criminal 22
Held forth his feet and legs, as far as where
The calf is; no whit more was visible.

And both the soles of all aflaming were; 25
Whereat the joints so strongly quivered, no
Grass-rope or withies could have bound them there.

As over things well oiled, the flame will flow 28
Only upon their outward surface shed,
So moved it there o'er all from heel to toe.

" O Master, who is he," thereon I said, 31
" Who writhes so, quivering more than do the rest,
" And sucked by flame that glows a deeper red? "

And he to me; " Himself shall teach thee best, 34
" Of him and of his wrongs, if down the side
" That lower slopes, I bear thee for the quest."

" My good is what doth please thee," I replied, 37
" Thou art my lord, and to thy will I bend,
" Thou know'st what silence ne'er from thee can hide."

We reached the fourth bank at the bridge's end, 40
And to the narrow deep, with hollows lined,
We turned to leftward and did so descend.

Nor yet he set me down, the Master kind, 43
From off his hip, till to the cleft came he.
Of him, whose legs confessed his tortured mind.

" Sad spirit," I began, " whoe'er thou be, 46
" Fixed like a stake, in whom is held beneath
" The upper part, speak, if thou canst, to me."

I stood as doth the friar who confesseth 49
The false assassin, who when fixed and tied,
Recalleth him and so delays his death.

" Standest thou there already? " then he cried, 52
" Standest thou there already, Boniface,
" By several years then hath the writing lied.

- " Has the wealth sated thee in so short space, 55
" For which thou didst not dread by fraud to take
" The lady fair, and bring to foul disgrace? "
- Then I became as those who do mistake 58
What is replied to them, and stand indeed
As though they're mocked, and no reply can make.
- Then Virgil said; " Say to him with all speed, 61
" ' Not he, not he am I, whom thou hast guessed, ' "
And I replied, obeying with good heed.
- Whereat the spirit both his feet did twist, 64
Then sighing, and with voice lamenting sad,
He said; " What then of me dost thou request?
- " If to know who I am, impatience bade 67
" Thee pass adown the bank and stays thee near,
" Know that I was with the Great Mantle clad;
- " Son was I of the she-bear: holding dear 70
" The cubs, I filled my purse on earth to aid
" Their need, and fill myself this purse down here."
- " Others there are dragged down beneath my head, 73
" In simony my predecessors all,
" Cowering in fissures of the stone afraid.
- " And thither presently I too shall fall, 76
" When he shall come, for whom the quick demand
" I made but now, mistaking thee withal.

“ But longer have my feet been baking, and 79
“ Longer have I held down my head, than he
“ With red-hot feet shall here inverted stand;

“ For from the westward coming I can see 82
“ A lawless shepherd, sinner unconcealed,
“ Fitted in truth to cover him and me,

“ Another Jason shall he be revealed, 85
“ Like him of ‘ Maccabees,’ and as his king
“ Was pliant to him, France’s king shall yield.”

Then in this manner made I answering, 88
And truly know not if I were too bold;
“ Ah, tell me now, what treasure had to bring

“ St. Peter to our Lord, ere to his hold 91
“ The keys were given? Surely was there nought
“ Save, ‘ Follow me,’ demanded. Neither gold

“ Nor silver from Matthias e’er were sought 94
“ By Peter or the rest, when chosen instead
“ Of that lost soul by guiltiness o’erfraught.

“ Wherefore abide, justly thou’rt punishèd; 97
“ And hold thou well the money got so ill,
“ Which against Charles such boldness in thee bred.

“ And were it not that I am hindered still 100
“ By reverence I have for those great keys,
“ Which in the gladsome life were at thy will,

" I well should use yet weightier words than these; 103

" Your avarice the world to grieving brings,

" Trampling the good, giving the wicked ease.

" The Evangelist beheld your shepherdings, 106

" When she that on the waters sits was seen

" Committing fornication with the Kings;

" She that with seven heads was born, I mean; 109

" And had her spouse well pleased with virtue stayed,

" Her ten horns as her witnesses had been.

" Of gold and silver, ye a god have made; 112

" How differ ye from the idolater,

" Since he to one, ye to a hundred prayed?

" Ah Constantine, what endless evils were 115

" Born, not of thy conversion, but of the dower

" Thou on the first rich Father did'st confer! "

Whether 'twas rage or conscience in that hour, 118

That, whilst I sang these notes, gnawed him increasing,

He sprawled with both his feet with greater power.

Truly I think my guide found them well pleasing, 121

With such contented mien he heard from me

The sound which my true words essayed expressing.

Then took me in his arms, and soon as he 124

Firm held me 'gainst his breast, reclimbed the road

By which a short time since descended we;

CANTO XIX

129

And though he clasped me, yet unwearied strode 127
Up to the arch's summit, where a way
From the fourth bulwark to the fifth^v abode.

Here gently down his burden did he lay, 130
Gently upon the cliff so rough and sheer,
Where even goats would find it hard to stray;

Thence yet another valley did appear. 133

CANTO XX

FROM the arch of the bridge, to which his Guide has carried him, Dante now sees the Diviners, Augurs, Sorcerers, etc., coming slowly along the bottom of the Fourth Chasm. By help of their incantations and evil agents, they had endeavoured to pry into the Future which belongs to the Almighty alone, interfering with His secret decrees; and now their faces are painfully twisted the contrary way; and, being unable to look before them, they are forced to walk backwards. The first that Virgil names is Amphiaraus; then Tiresias the Theban prophet, Aruns the Tuscan. Next comes Manto, daughter of Tiresias; on seeing whom, Virgil relates the origin of Mantua his native city. Afterwards he rapidly points out Eurypylus, the Grecian augur; Michael Scott, the great magician, with slender loins (possibly from his northern dress); Guido Bonatti of Forli; Asdente, shoemaker of Parma who left his leather and his awls to practise divination; and the wretched women who wrought malicious witchcraft with their herbs and waxen images. And now the Moon is setting in the western sea; time presses, and the Poets hasten to the next chasm.

The first canzone, of the sunken souls
Demands new verse to tell new punishment,
Which in the twentieth canto it enscrolls.

Already was I eager and intent
To look into the depth revealed below,
Bathed in the tears of agonised lament,

And through the circling valley moving, lo! 7
A folk all silent, weeping, slowly paced,
As in our world the Litanies will go.

But when yet lower down my glance did rest, 10
How strangely they were wrought awry I learned,
Each soul of them betwixt his chin and breast.

For each man's face toward his loins was turned, 13
And backward must they journey, for their sight
Forward might never pierce, howe'er they yearned.

Perchance ere now some, through the palsy's might,
Have thus been all distorted, but I ne'er 17
Have seen, nor think such form has known the light.

Reader, so God may grant thy reading bear 19
Some fruit, bethink thee if howe'er I tried,
My face could keep unstained with weeping there,

When that our image 'fore me I descried, 22
So twisted, that their tears as they did fall,
Must bathe the hinder parts where they divide?

Leaning against a rock of that harsh wall 25
Truly I wept, until my escort said;
"Art thou a fool too, like the others all?"

"Righteousness lives when pity here is dead; 28
"Who is so impious as in grief to bow,
"At God's high judgment hanging down his head?"

- " Lift up thine eyes, lift up, and see him now 31
" For whom the Thebans saw the earth give way,
" So that they cried aloud, ' Where rushest thou,

" ' Amphiaräus? Wouldst thou leave the fray? ' 34
" Yet ceased he not from rushing downward fast,
" To Minos who doth every sinner stay.

" See how his shoulders have become his breast; 37
" Because he wished to see too far before,
" Backward he looks, and backward goes at last.

" Tiresias see, who a changed aspect wore, 40
" When from a man a woman he became,
" Changing entirely all the limbs he bore;

" And after with his rod must strike the same 43
" Two close-wreathed serpents, ere his outward show
" Resumed its manly plumes and manly frame.

" Aruns is he who next must backward go, 46
" Who 'mid the mounts of Luni, near the sky,
" Above the Carrarese who toil below,

" Used 'twixt white marbles in a cave to lie 49
" For shelter, whence the stars and ocean's tide,
" Clear of all hindrance lay before his eye.

" And she whose flowing tresses from thee hide 52
" Her bosom, and whose body's other hair
" Groweth beyond upon the other side,

“ Was Manto, who searched many lands, and there, 55
“ Where I was born, abode; whence I am pleased
“ A little that thou find'st my speaking fair.

“ After her father was from life released, 58
“ And Bacchus' city came enslaved to be,
“ Long time she roamed the world and never ceased.

“ There lies a lake in lovely Italy, 61
“ Benaco named, hard by those Alps, which still
“ Above the Tyrol shut off Germany.

“ From Apennine by many a mountain rill 64
“ 'Twixt Garda and Val Camonica's sent
“ The water which that placid lake doth fill.

“ The midmost place, the pastor set o'er Trent, 67
“ Or Brescia, or Verona well might bless,
“ If by that way it happened that they went.

“ Peschiera's beauteous hold, which doth possess 70
“ Strength to front Brescia and Bergamo,
“ Rests where the shore sinks most to lowliness.

“ There all that from the lap doth overflow 73
“ Of lake Benaco, falls and down doth wend,
“ A rushing stream, through pastures green below.

“ When from the lake it first begins descend, 76
“ Mincio, 'tis called and not Benaco, till
“ Governo sees it join the Po and end.

- " Not far it runs before its eager will 79
" Fails in a level space, a marsh outspread,
" Which summer with unwholesomeness doth fill.
- " The cruel virgin, there by fortune led, 82
" Saw land uncultivate amid the fen
" And bare of folk; and in that dreary stead
- " Shunning all intercourse with sons of men, 85
" With servants for her magic arts, she stayed,
" And left at last her body void and vain.
- " They built the city where her bones were laid, 88
" And for her sake who chose it, called the place
" Mantua, with no other omen's aid.
- " Once did its people denser fill the space, 91
" Ere Casalodi's foolishness must bear,
" By Pinamonte's cheating, great disgrace.
- " Wherefore I charge thee, if thou ever hear 94
" My land's beginning told another way,
" Let not the truth through lies false aspect wear."
- And I, " My Master, so assured doth stay 97
" My faith, thy words so certain are to me,
" Spent embers were all others men could say.
- " But tell me of the people, whom we see, 100
" If any worth thy word are passing there,
" My mind returns to that continually."

And then he said; " He, from whose cheeks the hair
" Streams onward o'er his shoulders sun-embrowned,
" When Greece of every male was swept so bare,

" That in the cradles scarce were any found, 106
" An augur was; with Calchas gave the call
" To cut the cables that to Aulis bound.

" Euripilus his name; so doth it fall 109
" Somewhere within my Tragedy's high song,
" Well know'st thou that, thou who dost know it all.

" He who with flanks so lean goes next along 112
" Was Michael Scott, and well indeed he knew
" The mighty play of magic fraud and wrong.

" Guido Bonatti see; Asdente too; 115
" Too late repentant, now he well may sigh
" That cord and leather did not have their due.

" See the sad ones who threw the needle by, 118
" Shuttle and spindle, witchcraft to attain,
" Diviners they with herbs and imagery.

" But now come hence, for with his thorns is Cain 121
" Holding the confines of each hemisphere,
" And 'neath Seville touches the open main.

" E'en yesternight the moon was round and clear; 124
" Thou must remember, for she did no wrong
" To thee at all in the deep wood of fear."

Thus spake he to me, as we moved along. 127

CANTO XXI

THE Poets come to the arch of the Fifth Chasm or Budget which holds the Barterers or Barrators, the malefactors who made secret and vile traffic of their Public offices and authority, in order to gain money. And as the Tyrants and Assassins (canto xii.) are steeped in boiling Blood, and have the Centaurs (emblems of Violence) watching them with arrows, and keeping each at his proper depth; so here the Barterers lie covered with filthy Pitch which clings to them, and get themselves rent in pieces by horrid Demons—Shadows of their sins—whenever they appear above its surface. The chasm is very dark, and at first Dante can see nothing but the pitch boiling in it. A Demon arrives with one of the Senators of Lucca on his shoulders, throws him down from the bridge, tells what a harvest of Barrators there is in that city, and hastens away for more. Other Demons, hitherto concealed beneath the bridge (like secret sins), rush out and fiercely teach the poor sneaking senator under what conditions he has to swim in the pitch. After some parley with Malacoda, chief of the Fiends, the poets are sent on, along the edge of the chasm, with an ugly and questionable escort of Ten.

Such converse held we, on from bridge to bridge,
As this my comedy cares not to sing,
And came and held the summit of the ridge,

And stayed to see what in the cleft might cling 4
Of Malebolge next, what vain lament;
And marvellously dark was everything.

As 'mid Venetian arsenal's armament, 7
Boils the tenacious pitch in winter days,
To caulk the ships, whose hulls are strained and rent

So that they cannot sail; and here one stays 10
Instead to build anew, another now
Plugs ribs that voyaged have o'er many ways;

Some hammer at the stern, some at the prow, 13
One mends the mainsail, one the jib in fine,
While some twist ropes, and some make oars to row;

So not by fire, but by the arts divine, 16
Behold dense pitch boiled up continually,
And thick as glue o'erflowed the banks low line.

I saw it; but therein I did not see 19
Aught but the bubbles that the boiling made,
The whole mass heaving, sinking, constantly.

Whilst all the depths intently I surveyed, 22
"Look, look," my leader cried, and straightway drew
Me to him, from the place where I was stayed.

Then turned I round, (as one who longs to view 25
The thing, whate'er it be, that he must shun,
And with a sudden fear is piercèd through,

Nor slackens speed that further sight be won,) 28
And a black demon coming from behind
I saw, and up the cliff most quickly run.

- Ah! How in him raged fierceness unconfined! 31
How bitter every gesture seemed to me,
With wings outspread, light footed as the wind!
- Upon his shoulders, sharp and high to see, 34
Both haunches of a sinner made a load,
Each foot he grasped, there where the sinews be.
- "Ye Malebranche of our bridge and road, 37
"An Elder of San Zita, see," he said,
"Thrust him beneath, while I to that abode
- "Return again, where many such are bred; 40
"Except Bonturo, barrators are they all,
"For money there, 'No' becomes 'Yes' instead."
- He cast him down, then on the hard cliff wall 43
He wheeled, and mastiff never was more fain,
Let loose, upon the robbers trail to fall.
- The sinner plunged and writhing rose again, 46
But hidden 'neath the bridge cried demons near,
"Here is the sacred face besought in vain,
- "Not as in Serchio go'st thou, swimming here; 49
"Wherefore unless our hooks thou wish to try,
"Let not thy body from the pitch rise clear."
- With more than a hundred prongs they strike and cry,
"Here must thou dance all covered, that if still 53
"Thou pilferest it shall be privately."

E'en in such manner the cooks' vassals will 55
Dip with their hooks into the caldron deep
The flesh, lest floating it should fare but ill.

Then my good Master said; " Now do thou creep 58
" Behind a jag, and be thou hidden there,
" That so thy presence from their sight thou keep;

" Nor fear for any outrage whatsoe'er 61
" Done unto me, for I these matters know,
" And like affray have been in otherwhere."

With that beyond the bridge-head did he go, 64
And when to the sixth bank his footsteps led,
Good need had he a steadfast front to show.

For, with such raging and such fury dread, 67
As dogs will show, attacking the poor man,
Who sudden where he stops will beg for bread,

Rushed from below the bridge the demon clan, 70
And raised their grappling irons, threateningly;
He cried, " Be less ungoverned, if ye can!

" Before these claws of yours lay hold of me, 73
" Let one of you come forth and hear my word,
" Then as to hooking me, take counsel ye! "

All cried, " Let Malacoda go! " one stirred 76
Thereat, and left the others standing fast,
And said, " What profits this when it is heard? "

" Think'st thou, O Malacoda, I have passed 79
" So far," my Master said, " as thou dost find,
" Secure already 'gainst your hindrance vast,

" Without the Will Divine, and fate grown kind? 82
" Let me pass on; along this savage way
" To lead another, Heaven has to me assigned."

Then was his pride fallen in disarray, 85
So that his hook dropped down his feet beside,
And, " Strike him not," to the others must he say.

" O thou upon the bridge," to me my guide, 88
" Mid the great splinters, cowering, cowering low,
" Return, secure by me now may'st thou bide."

Whereat I moved tow'rd him, and that not slow; 91
Such forward steps at once the devils made,
I feared the compact would not bind the foe.

So once I saw the infantry afraid, 94
Who from Caprona under treaty came,
Seeing themselves 'mid enemies arrayed.

Close to my guide I drew my bodily frame, 97
While that mine eyes on all their acts were keen,
For all their semblance was of evil fame.

They low'red their hooks and spoke themselves
between; 100

" Shall I not catch him in the rump? " I heard,
One answered, " Yes, see that thou catch him clean."

CANTO XXI

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But now that demon who had still conferred 103
With my fair leader, quickly turned his head,
“Peace, peace, Scarmiglione,” came his word.

Then, “Further by this cliff to go,” he said, 106
“Can not be done, since the sixth arch is found
“In fragments, to its depths all shattered;

“If to advance still further ye are bound, 109
“Then for the present on this ridge wall stay;
“Nearby a road lies o’er another mound.

“Five hours beyond this hour in yesterday, 112
“Did years, six, sixty and twelve hundred end,
“Since here was broken down the passage way.

“Thitherward some of these my men I send, 115
“To look if any wight in air be seen,
“Go with them, none will prove a treacherous friend.”

“Step forward Calcabrina, Alichin’,” 118
He said, “and thou Cagnazzo, and to guide
“The ten, let Barbariccia be keen.

“Libicocco, and Draghinazzo tried, 121
“Tusked Ciriatto, Graffiacane too,
“Mad Rubicante, Farfarell’ beside.

“Go ye all forth, and search the boiling glue; 124
“Up to the other cliff, these safe let be,
“That o’er these dens unbroken goeth through.”

" Ah me, my Master, what is this I see? 127

" Ah, let us with no escort go alone,

" I ask it not, if thou canst conduct me;

" If thou art wary as thy wont is known, 130

" Dost thou not see them how their teeth they grind,

" And how their brows all threatening are grown? "

And he, " No fear in thee would I now find; 133

" Let them gnash on, have thou thereat no care, "

" The seething wretches 'tis that move their mind."

By the left bank to wheel they did prepare, 136

But first between his teeth protruded each

His tongue, as signal to his captain there,

And he then made a trumpet of his breech. 139

CANTO XXII

THE Demons, under their " great Marshal " Barbariccia, lead the way, along the edge of the boiling Pitch; and Dante, who keeps looking sharply, relates how he saw the Barrators lying in it, like frogs in ditch-water, with nothing but their " muzzles " out, and instantly vanishing at sight of Barbariccia; and how Graffiacane hooked one of them and hauled him up like a fresh-speared otter, all the other Demons gathering round and tarring on Rubicante to mangle the unlucky wretch. At Dante's request, Virgil goes forward, and asks him who he is; and no sooner does the pitchy thief mention how he took to barratry in the service of worthy King Thibault of Navarre, than he is made to feel the bitter force of Ciriatto's tusks. 'Barbariccia now clasps him with both arms, and orders the rest to be quiet, till Virgil has done with questioning. But " Scarletmoor " loses patience; " Dragonface " too will have a clutch at the legs; Farfarella, " wicked Hell-bird " that he is, glares ready to strike; and their " Decurion " has difficulty in keeping them off. At last the cunning barrator, though Cagnazzo raises his dog-face in scornful opposition, plays off a trick by which he contrives to escape. Thereupon Calcabrina and Alichino fall to quarrelling, seize each other like two mad vultures, and drop into the burning pitch; and the whole troop is left in fitting disorder.

I've seen how horsemen shift their camp, and how
They move to onset, or on muster bent,
And how they may retreat, I've seen ere now;

O Aretines, I've seen swift squadrons sent, 4
And foragers go marching where ye dwell,
Running of jousts, and shock of tournament,

Anon with trumpets or the clashing bell, 7
With drums, and castle signals, and things found
Foreign and strange, and native things as well;

But never yet to such strange bugle sound, 10
Have horse or foot been seen to move by me,
Nor ship by any sign of star or ground.

We went with the ten demons;—company 13
How fearful! but “in church with saints,” ’tis said,
And “in the taverns with the guzzlers be.”

Yet to the pitch my gaze intent was led, 16
To see the fosse in every character,
And all the folk within its burning spread.

As when the dolphins to the mariner, 19
Arching their backs, give sign that clearly shows
That soon to save his ship he must prepare;

So now and then, to ease his torturing throes, 22
Some sinner showed his back above the tide,
And hid more swift than lightning comes and goes.

As frogs will squat the water's edge beside, 25
Within a ditch, with just their muzzles showing,
So that their feet and all the rest they hide;

So stood the sinners everywhere; but knowing 28
That Barbariccia drew near, away
Beneath the seething flood, were quickly going.

I saw, (my heart still shudders as I say), 31
One soul who waited, as 'twill oft appear,
While one darts off, another frog will stay;

And Graffiacane, who passed by most near, 34
Hooked him, and by his pitchy locks did haul
Him forth, who seemed as he an otter were.

Already knew I now the names of all, 37
So did I note them when the choice was made,
And listened how would one the other call.

“ O Rubicante, so that he be flayed, 40
“ Plant firm thy talons on his back,” the cries
Of those accursed ones together bade.

And I, “ My Master, save some power denies, 43
“ Learn who this miserable man may be,
“ Now fallen in the hands of enemies.”

My Master to his side went presently, 46
And asked him who he was; then came his word;
“ The kingdom of Navarre gave birth to me.

“ My mother made me servant to a lord; 49
“ For she had borne me to a ribald, who
“ Wasted himself and all his substance stored.

" Then good King Thibault's house I came unto, 52
" And there in barratry won mastership,
" Whence in this heat I pay the reckoning due."

And Ciriatto, on each side whose lip 55
A tusk came forth, as in a hog appear,
Made him to feel how one of them could rip.

Mid evil cats the mouse was come too near, 58
But Barbariccia flung his arms around,
And said; " Stand back while I embrace him here."

And turning to my Master said, " Propound 61
" Thy question, if thou still desire to know,
" Before to rend him, is another found."

My Guide therefore; " Say if the pitch below, 64
" Does any Latin 'mid the sinners hide."
And he replied; " I parted even now

" From one who neighboured them, the other side; 67
" Would that I still with him in shelter lay,
" Not hook nor claw would make me terrified."

" We've borne too much," did Libicocco say; 70
And with his hook he seized the arm and caught
The muscle there, and tore it out away.

And Draghignazzo, too, eagerly sought 73
To catch his legs; whence their Decurion
Wheeled quickly round, with face to fierceness wrought.

When they to something of a peace were won, 76
My guide demanded of him, hastily,
Who still kept gazing hard his wound upon,

“ Who was he then from whom was made by thee, 79
“ Such sorry leave taking, to come ashore? ”
“ Friar Gomita, was it,” answered he,

“ Who in Gallura, when in hand he bore 82
“ His master’s foes, being of fraud fulfilled,
“ So did to them, they praised him all therefor.

“ Money he took, and as he says, good-willed 85
“ He let them go, and many ways beside,
“ Was no small barrator but highly skilled.

“ Don Michel Zanche doth near him abide 88
“ Of Logodoro; ne’er their tongues can win
“ Fatigue, when on Sardinian things they’re tried.

“ Ah me! how fierce that other seems to grin! 91
“ More would I say, but fear makes my heart cold,
“ That he is bent to scratch my scurfy skin.”

As Farfarello, near to striking, rolled 94
His eyes, the Marshal great upon him wheeled,
And said; “ Vile bird, stand off, thy rage withhold! ”

“ If ye would Tuscans hear, or see revealed, 97
“ Or Lombards, I will bring them from this pit,”
The sinner said, with fear but ill concealed;

" But let the evil claws keep off a whit, 100
" That they may fear not for their vengeance, and
" I, while in this place all unmoved I sit,

" For one I am, will seven bring to land, 103
" When I shall whistle as our wont it is
" To do, when one of us attains the strand."

Cagnazzo lifted up that snout of his, 106
Shaking his head and said; " What malice now!
" He thinks to throw him down, contriving this."

Then he who many a trick and wile did know, 109
" Far too malicious am I," then replied,
" I make more grief for my companions grow."

No longer Alichin held back, but cried 112
Against the others, " If thou stoop, beware!
" I shall not after thee at gallop stride,

" But o'er the pitch shall beat my wings in air; 115
" Leave we the height, and make the bank a screen
" And see if thou alone our force canst dare."

O reader, now shall novel sport be seen! 118
Each to the other side his eyes directed;
He first, who most unripe to do't had been.

The Navarrese then well his time selected, 121
Set firm his feet, and sprang as swift as thought,
Free from their purpose, as they least expected,

CANTO XXII

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Thereat to each the sting of guilt was brought, 124
 But most to him from whom the error grew;
 Therefore he rushed forth crying; "Thou art caught."

But nought availed it; down he went and through 127
 The pitch, for, faster than the wings, sped fear;
 The demon raised his breast as up he flew;

Not otherwise the duck dives downward sheer, 130
 When close the falcon draws, escaping quick,
 And he in baffled wrath must upward veer.

And Calcabrina, furious at the trick, 133
 Kept flying after him, desiring quite
 He should escape, a quarrel thus to pick;

And when the barrator was lost to sight, 136
 He turned his talons on his mate, and so
 Above the fosse, grappled with him in flight.

But a good sparrow-hawk the first did show, 139
 And clawed him well, and both in eager stress
 Fell in the boiling pool's midmost, below.

At once the heat unlocked them; none the less 142
 They had no pow'r to rise into the air,
 So glued their wings were into uselessness.

Then Barbariccia with the others there 145
 Lamenting, ordered four of them to fly
 Across, with all the drags; swiftly they fare

Each to his post, this side and that; they try 148
To reach the lined ones, with their hooks stretched out,
Who in the crust were scalded horribly;

And thus entangled did we leave the rout. 151

CANTO XXIII

DANTE keeps following his Guide in silence, with head bent down, meditating on the things he has had to witness in that chasm of the pitch. The fable of the Frog and the Mouse comes into his mind; then fear that the ugly Demons may seek vengeance for their misfortune. He sees them coming, with outstretched wings, when Virgil takes him in his arms, and rapidly glides down with him into the next chasm. Here they find the Hypocrites walking along the narrow bottom in slow procession, heavy-laden with cloaks of lead, which are gilded and of dazzling brightness on the outside. Dante speaks with Catalano and Loderingo, two Friars of Bologna; and has just begun to tell them what he thinks of their evil deeds, when he observes Caiaphas stretched across the narrow road, and fixed to it, in such a way that all the other Hypocrites have to trample on him as they pass. The sight of that High Priest and his ignominious punishment is enough. Hypocrisy did its very utmost in him and "the others of that Council," for which the Jews still suffer. The Poets hasten away to another class of sinners.

Silent, alone, and without company,
We went, the one the other following,
As minor friars on their road we see.

My thought, from reason of this quarrelling, 4
Turned unto Aesop's fable, which doth tell
The tale of frog and mouse, admonishing;

For Ay and Yea are not more comparable, 7
Than is the one case and the other, when
The first and last of each is looked at well.

And as from one thought springs the next again, 10
So from this one another being born,
My first great fear was doubled in me then.

For thus I thought: " Since these are put to scorn 13
" Through us and brought to hurts and mockeries,
" With rage I must believe their breasts are torn.

" If wrath be added to ill-will in these, 16
" They will more cruelly pursue us here,
" Than does the hound the hare he strives to seize."

Already felt I all my hair, with fear, 19
Rise on my head, and looking back intent,
" The Malebranche are already near,

" Master," I said, " My heart will be forespent 22
" With dread, except thou hide us speedily;
" E'en now I hear them hot upon the scent."

And he: " If I of leaded glass should be, 25
" I should not draw thy outward image more
" Quickly to me, than I the inward see.

" E'en now, thy thoughts the act and aspect wore 28
" Of mine 'mid which they entered; both have set
" One resolution in my mind therefore.

“ If the right side so slopeth as to let 31
“ Us slip into the other cleft, descending,
“ The chase thou fearest we shall baffle yet.”

Barely his speech of counsel he was ending, 34
When I beheld them come, not far away,
Longing to seize us, wide their wings extending.

Sudden my guide caught me to him, (as may 37
A mother, who is wakened by the sound,
And near her sees the flames in darting play,

And takes her child and flies, nor flings around 40
Her e'en a shift, because her thought is all
Set upon him, and self in him is drowned;)

And down from off the ridge of that hard wall, 43
To the hanging rock he gave himself supine,
Which to the next cleft like a dam doth fall.

Ne'er water swifter down a spout's incline 46
Speedeth, to turn a land-mill's wheel, whene'er
Nearest the ladles flows its rushing line,

As sped my master down that rock ridge there, 49
Carrying me upon his breast, as though
His son, and not his comrade, he did bear.

Scarcely his feet had touched the floor below, 52
When they appeared upon the heights above,
But nought of fear for that he cared to show;

For the High Providence, Which doth approve 55
Them ministers of that fifth fosse to be,
Takes from them all their power therefrom to move.

We found a painted people presently 58
Beneath, slow moving, weeping, sore bestead,
With tired drawn faces pitiful to see.

Cloaks wore they with deep hoods, which coverèd 61
Their eyes, so fashioned to my eager sight,
As those which in Cologne for monks are made.

Gilded they were without and dazzling bright, 64
But all within of lead, a load to bear
That would make Frederick's like straw seem light.

O weary mantle for eternal wear! 67
We turned again to our left hand, to keep
With them, intent on the sad weeping there;

But through the weight, that weary fellowship 70
So slowly came, that company we found
New made, at every movement of the hip.

" I pray thee, find one soul by deed renowned 73
" Or name," so said I then unto my guide,
" And as we go, be pleased to glance around."

And, " Stay your feet," behind us some one cried, 76
Who understood the Tuscan speech, " ye men,
" Who through the brown air all so quickly glide.

“Perchance that which ye ask from me ye’ll gain.” 79
Whereat my leader turned and, “Wait,” he said,
“And at his pace accompany him there.”

Still stood I and beheld two, who displayed 82
In looks much haste of mind with me to be,
But the strait path and heavy load delayed.

When they came up, long time askance at me 85
They gazed, but not a single word did breathe,
Then turned and said: “This one seems living, see

“The way his throat is moved, but if to death 88
“They’re servants, why are they allowed the grace
“Without the heavy stole to tread this path?”

Then unto me: “O Tuscan, who this place, 91
“The college of sad hypocrites, hast found,
“Scorn not to tell us of thy name and race.”

“By the fair Arno, in the burgh renowned, 94
“I came to birth and spent my youth,” I said,
“This is the body I have ever owned.

“But who are ye, by whom such grief is shed, 97
“As well I see, streaming adown the cheek?
“What glittering punishment is o’er you spread?”

“Our orange cloaks,” one then began to speak, 100
“Are made of lead so thick, the weight of these
“It is which causes thus their scales to creak.

- " Both jovial Friars were we and Bolognese; 103
" I Catalano, Loderingo he,
" Together chosen to preserve the peace
- " Of thy fair city, as most frequently, 106
" One man alone is sought; still doth abide
" Round the Gardingo, lo! our testimony."
- " O Friars, your sin—" beginning, I replied, 109
And said no more, for to my sight was plain
One on the ground with three stakes crucified.
- When he saw me, heaving deep sighs of pain 112
Into his beard, he writhed as might a snake,
And Catalano, seeing this, again
- Said to me: " This transfixed one 'neath the stake
" Counsell'd the Pharisees, that it was meet 116
" One man should suffer for the people's sake.
- " Naked he lies, stretched out upon this street, 118
" As thou canst see, and feels how heavy is
" Each passer-by who treads him 'neath his feet;
- " His father-in-law in torment like to this 121
" Bides also here, and all that Council, who
" Sowed for the Jews that seed of miseries."
- Much marvelled Virgil over him anew, 124
Exiled upon the cross eternally,
Stretched out so ignominiously to view,

And thereon to the Friar these words spake he: 127

“ Be pleased, if it be lawful, now to tell

“ If on the right hand any gap there be,

“ Whereby for both to leave ’tis possible, 130

“ Without constraining one of the black host,

“ To lift us from the bottom of this well.”

And he replied: “ Far nearer than thou know’st, 133

“ Comes from the great round wall a ridge of stone,

“ By which the cruel valleys all are crossed,

“ Save that ’tis broken o’er this fosse alone; 136

“ Up by its ruins can you make ascent,

“ Which, sloping down, are in a heap o’erthrown.”

My guide a little stood with head down bent, 139

Then: “ He who his hook among the sinners plies

“ Up yonder, told me falsely of the way.”

“ I learned the devil’s sins and subtleties 142

“ Once at Bologna,” said the Friar, “ and lo!

“ He is a liar and father of lies.”

Then with great steps onward my guide did go, 145

Moved somewhat, as it seemed, to angry heat,

And I too left those laden souls and slow,

Following in the prints of his dear feet, 148

CANTO XXIV

IN this canto, the vehement despair of the poor Italian peasant, who has no food for his sheep, and thinks he is going to lose them, gives a lively image of Dante's dependence on his mystic Guide; while the Sun with freshened hair (*Crinitus Apollo*, Aen. ix. 638) points to the real Virgil. Here too on the shattered bridge, as at the foot of the Hill in canto first, help in many senses is necessary; and Dante, put quite out of breath by climbing from the den of the Hypocrites, sits down exhausted. Virgil reminds him of their Errand—of the great things which lie beyond this painful journey through Hell—and he rises instantly; and “ keeps speaking,” as they go on, “ that he may not seem faint.” In the Seventh Chasm, which is very dark and filled with hideous serpents, they find the Thieves; and get speech of Vanni Fucci. He is ashamed at being found amongst the Thieves, and recognised by Dante, who had “ seen him a man of blood and brutal passions; ” and he foretells the disasters that will lead to the Poet's exile.

When, in the youthful year, the Sun doth stay
Tempering his locks beneath Aquarius,
And nights already wane tow'rd's half the day,

When on the ground the hoar frost copies us 4
His fair white sister's image, but he plies
But little time, a pen that's tempered thus;

The peasant, for whom fodder fails, will rise
And look and see the fields all white as snow,
Whereat in his despair he strikes his thighs,

And goes indoors lamenting to and fro, 10
As some poor wretch filled with a vain despair,
Then coming forth again feels new hope grow,

Because its face the world has altered there 13
In little time; then with his staff, afield
He drives his flock and seeks the pastures fair;

So when his downcast brow to me revealed 16
The Master, thus I felt despondency,
But soon the wound beneath the salve was healed;

For when we reached the shattered bridge, to me 19
My guide turned, with that aspect sweet and kind,
Which at the mountain's foot I first did see.

His arms he spread, having within his mind 22
Chosen some plan, first there regarding close
The ruins, then he grasped me from behind,

And as one works who seems as if he knows 25
And calculates beforehand all he'll need,
So lifting me on one great rock, he chose

Another splinter out, and said, " Make speed, 28
" Climb over that one, but if it will bear
" Thy weight, first test with caution and good heed."

No way for one with leaden cloak was there, 31
For scarcely we, I helped, and he so light,
Could mount from jag to jag, up that steep stair.

And had the ascent not been of lesser height 34
Upon that side, whate'er had been his fate,
I know for me, I had been vanquished quite.

But since all Malebolge towards the gate 37
Of the profoundest well doth still depend,
Each valley in it is so situate,

That one side rises, while one doth descend; 40
We strove however to the point at last,
Where all the broken stone came to an end.

From out my lungs the breath was drawn so fast, 43
That at the top no further could I press,
But sat me down when once the steep was passed.

"Now must thou shake from off thee slothfulness," 46
My Master said, "for fame comes not to men
"Who sit on down, or lie in warmth and ease;

"And whoso burns his life and doth not gain 49
"Fame, leaves on earth behind him but a trace
"As smoke in air, or foam in water, vain.

"Rise then; o'ercome thy panting weariness 52
"With thy brave soul, which ne'er in fight can fail,
"Save the gross body drags it to disgrace.

"A longer ladder have we yet to scale, 55
"This deed suffices not; so if thy guide
"Thou understandest, may thine acts avail,"

Then I arose, showing myself supplied 58
Better with breath than I could feel, and said,
“ Go on then; I am strong, with courage tried.”

Straight up the rocky cliff our pathway led, 61
And narrow was it, difficult and steep,
E'en more than was the former road to tread.

And as I went I spake, my show to keep 64
Of strength, whereat a voice not fitted well
For speaking, came from the next hollow's deep.

What words it said in truth I cannot tell, 67
Though on the archway's ridge I was, which there
Crosses, but anger seemed therein to dwell.

Downward I looked, but living eyesight ne'er 70
Could reach the bottom, for the shadows dense.
Wherefore I said, “ O Master, let us fare

“ Unto the further wall, descending thence, 73
“ For as I look down and distinguish nought,
‘ So can I grasp not what I hear from hence.”

“ No other answer,” said he, “ shall be brought 76
“ Except the deed; for to a fair request
“ Fit sequel is the act in silence wrought.”

Unto the bridge's head thereon we passed 79
Descending where the eighth bank's buttress stood,
And then the chasm was made manifest;

And there within I saw a fearful brood 82
Of serpents; such a strange and diverse band,
That to recall them still affrights my blood.

Boast Libya no longer of thy sand, 85
For though chelydri, jaculi, pareae,
Cencri and amphisboena haunt thy land,

Yet ne'er so many plagues therein could be, 88
Nor so accursed, were Aethiopia wide
And all the Red Sea countries joined to thee.

And naked men ran wildly, terrified, 91
Amid these cruel direful enemies,
And lacked a cave or heliotrope to hide.

Their hands were bound behind with snakes; and
these 94
Piercing the loins, fixed there the tail and head,
And made in front great knots of miseries.

And lo! at one, near to our bank, there sped 97
A serpent suddenly, and pierced him where
The neck doth end and the two shoulders spread.

Not "O," not "I" were writ so swiftly e'er, 100
As he caught fire and burned, and in a rain
Of ashes dropped to earth, consumèd there;

Upon the ground he lay destroyed, and then 103
The powder of itself together grew,
And to its former shape returned again;

CANTO XXIV

163

So dies the Phoenix and is born anew, 106
When its five hundredth year is well-nigh passed;
(Our Sages great bear witness thereunto;)

From herb and grain in life it keeps a fast, 109
And feeds on incense and amomum tears,
And swathed in nard and myrrh it is at last.

As when demoniac violence earthward bears 112
A man, or other force wherewith he's bound,
He falls and knows not how, and so appears

When he arises, staring wildly round, 115
Wholly bewildered by his anguish throes,
And as he stares, he sighs; so then was found,

Not otherwise, the sinner when he rose. 118
O Power of God! how awful canst thou be,
That in thy vengeance showerest such fearful blows!

My guide then asked him who he was; and he 121
Replied: "Short while ago I fell like rain,
"Into this gullet fierce, from Tuscany.

"For life of beasts I yearned, not life of men, 124
"Mule that I was; I, Vanni Fucci, brute,
"Found in Pistoia's town a worthy den."

And I: "I pray thee, bid him stand not mute; 127
"I knew him once, a man of wrath and blood,
"Ask him what crime has borne this bitter fruit."

The sinner heard and feigned not; where he stood 130
He turned his mind toward me and his face,
Whereon a look of dolorous shame did brood,

Thensaid: "That thou shouldst seeme in this place 133
" Of wretchedness, pains me so bitterly,
" That loss of former life seemed less disgrace.

" Yet what thou askest can I not deny; 136
" So far I am thrust down, because I stole
" The goodly trappings from the sacristy,

" And others, falsely blamed, once paid the toll. 139
" But that this sight for ever may'st thou rue,
" From these dark caves escaping safe and whole,

" Open thine ears unto my warning true; 142
" Pistoia shall be thinned of Neri first,
" Then laws and people Florence shall renew;

" From Val di Magra Mars shall bring a curst 145
" And fiery vapour, in dark clouds concealed;
" An angry and impetuous storm shall burst

" In battle rout upon Piceno's field; 148
" Whence sudden it shall rend the mist apart,
" And wounds to every Bianco shall be dealed.

" And this I say that it may wring thy heart." 151

CANTO XXV

At the end of his angry prophecy, Fucci rises into a boundless pale rage, such as is hardly known in northern countries; and like the sacrilegious thief and brute that he is, gives vent to it in the wildest blasphemy. The serpents instantly set upon him, and inflict such punishment that Dante regards them as friends ever after. Cacus too, with a load of serpents on his haunch and a fiery dragon on his shoulders, comes shouting in pursuit of him. Dante afterwards finds five of his own countrymen—first three in human shape, then two changed into reptiles—and by dint of great attention learns the names of them all, and very accurately sees the unheard-of transformations they have to undergo. The reptiles are Cianfa de' Donati and Guercio de' Cavalcanti; the three in human shape are Agnello de' Brunelleschi, Buoso degli Abati, and Puccio de' Galigai—all five of very noble kindred, "all from Florence, and great thieves in their time" [*omnes de Florentia, et magni fures suo tempore.*—Pietro].

Ended his words, the thief all furiously,
With both the fists upraised his hands, and cried
"Take them, O God, since they are aimed at Thee!"

Henceforth the serpents were my friends. One tied 4
Itself in coils about his neck, as then
It said, "In silence shalt thou now abide."

Another round his arms bound him again, 7
Linking itself so firm in front that he
Could free them not, however he might strain.

Why, O Pistoia, dost thou not decree 10
To burn thyself and end, since thou art crowned
With evil, more than e'en the seed of thee?

In all the Circles dark of Hell I found 13
No spirit against God so insolent,
Not he who from Thebes' wall fell to the ground.

Thereat he fled with all his curses spent; 16
And lo! a centaur, crying, full of rage,
"Where is the fierce one? where?" before us went.

I doubt if e'en Maremma holds in wage 19
So many snakes as on his haunch were spread,
To where the human form doth disengage.

Over his shoulders, just behind the head, 22
With open wings a dragon lay, and this
On whomsoe'er he meets sharp fire doth shed.

Thereon my Master said, "That Cacus is, 25
"Who oft beneath the Aventinean steep,
"Hath made a lake of blood through villainies.

"He may not one road with his brethren keep, 28
"Because he stole from that great herdsman, when
"The herd lay near him, with his cunning deep.

"By Hercules his crooked deeds were then 31
"Ended beneath the club; perchance were given
"A hundred blows to him who felt not ten."

Whilst Virgil spake, lo! he was onward driven, 34
And spirits three came 'neath us and not I
Nor yet my leader saw they were arriven,

Until they cried, " Who are ye? " Suddenly 37
Our story therefore stayed, and we gave heed
To them alone there, passing others by.

I knew them not, but as is wont indeed 40
Most times to happen, so it chanced that one
To name another had a sudden need;

Saying, " Where has Cianfa stayed? " Whereon, 43
In order that my guide might stand intent,
I laid my finger then my lips upon.

Reader, if now thy mind is slowly bent 46
To credit me, the wonder is but slight,
For I, who saw it, hardly can consent.

Whilst I upon them kept fastened my sight, 49
Lo! a six footed serpent swift as thought
Darts upon one and holds him closely plight.

Its middle feet his belly clasped; it caught 52
His arms and held with those in front; and then
In both his cheeks to set its teeth it sought.

Along his thighs the hinder feet did strain; 55
Its tail between the two it thrust, and o'er
The loins behind it curved it up again,

- Ivy upon a tree fast rooted more 58
Was never seen, than round the other's frame
The dreadful beast entwined the limbs it bore.
- They stuck together as 'neath softening flame 61
Will bits of wax, and mixed their colour so,
Till over both it seemed a changing came,
- As o'er the paper 'fore the flame will go 64
A hue of brown, which yet not black will be,
And the white dies away, which erst did show.
- The other two looked on; both cried, " Ah me! 67
" Agnello, how thou changest! Lo! nor two
" We can behold, nor one henceforth, in thee."
- Now into one swiftly the two heads grew, 70
Two shapes appeared blent in a single face,
Where both of them at last were lost to view.
- Four members to two arms thereon gave place, 73
The thighs and legs, the belly, and the chest
Became limbs unknown to the human race.
- Gone was the former shape that each possessed, 76
Neither and both the perverse form abides,
And so with languid step away it passed.
- E'en as the lizard, when the Dog Star rides 79
A scourge on high, like lightning seems to be,
If changing hedges o'er the road it glides,

So flashed a little serpent fiery, 82
Towards the bowels of the other two,
Lived and black as peppercorn to see.

And that part then, in one, it piercèd through 85
Where our first nourishment we take, and then
Stretched at his feet fell down and lay in view.

The pierced thief gazed on it, nor spake again, 88
Rather he yawned, with feet held motionless,
As sleep or fever's weight on him had lain.

The serpent eyed him, and he it no less; 91
Through mouth of one and through the other's wound,
Smoke steamed and mingled in one cloudiness.

Let Lucan hold his peace, nor seek to astound 94
With poor Sabellus and Nasidius; nor
Let him refuse to hear what now shall sound.

Let Ovid cease with Arethusa, or 97
With Cadmus, I care not, if serpent this
Became, that fountain, in his poem's lore;

For ne'er two natures changed in verse of his, 100
Thus front to front, so that both forms were there,
Both ready to exchange their substances.

Together answered in such way the pair, 103
That to a fork his tail the serpent cleft,
And feet o' the wounded drawn together were.

The legs and thighs were blent in way so deft, 106
That very shortly there where they were placed
Together, not a visible mark was left.

The shape that in the other was effaced, 109
The cloven tail assumed and all its skin
Grew soft, and hard the other's in like haste.

I saw the arms at the armpits enter in, 112
And lo! to match their shortening in the brute,
Two feet an equal lengthening did win.

And next the hinder feet, fused in one root, 115
Became the member man concealeth, when
Two limbs from out the wretch's 'gan to shoot;

Whilst in new colour one and the other then 118
Were veiled by smoke, which made on one to grow
The hair, from off the other stripped again;

One rose, the other fell, and even so 121
Moved not the impious lights, which still gazed where
Each on the other did his face bestow;

He who was standing tow'rd his temples there 124
Drew his, and from the superfluity,
Out of the smooth cheeks grew of ears a pair;

That which withdrew not but remainèd free, 127
Formed from its overplus a nose; and made
The lips to size which seemed more meet to be,

He who lay prone thrusts his face forth instead, 130
And as the snail draws in her horns, all swift
He draws his ears backward within his head.

His tongue erst whole and fit for speech is cleft; 133
And in the other closes the forked tongue;
And now the smoke stays and no more doth drift.

The soul that had become a brute, along 136
The valley hissing fled, and at its back
The other, sputtering his words among,

Then turned his new-formed shoulders on its track, 139
And said to the other, " Lo! upon this road,
" Like me, Buoso shall no crawling lack."

Thus saw I how did change the seventh load 142
And rechange; let my faulty pen here find
In the theme's newness grace on it bestowed.

And though perplexed mine eyes were, and my mind
Somewhat confused and troubled, truth to tell, 146
Yet fled they not away so undefined;

But Puccio Sciancato knew I well, 148
And of the three who first came, he alone
Was changed not; and the other miserable,

Was he for whom, Gaville, thou makest moan. 151

CANTO XXVI

DANTE, after having seen and recognised the five Noble Thieves, addresses his native city in bitter concentrated sorrow and shame, mingled with heartfelt longings and affection. The calamities which misgovernment, faction, and crime had been preparing for many years before the date of his mystic Vision, and which he himself as Chief Magistrate in 1300 had done his utmost to prevent, are notified in form of prophecy. His own exile, though not directly alluded to, and his hopes of "morning"—of deliverance for Florence and himself, and of justice on their enemies—were nearly connected with those calamities. And when he sees the fate of Evil Counsellors in the Eighth Chasm, to which his Guide now leads him, he "curbs his genius," and deeply feels he has not to seek that deliverance and justice by fraud. The arts of the fox, on however great a scale, are extremely hateful to him. To employ that superior wisdom, which is the good gift of the Almighty, in deceiving others, for any purpose, is a Spiritual Theft of the most fearful kind; and the sinners, who have been guilty of it, are running along the narrow chasm, each "stolen" from view, wrapt in the Flame of his own Consciousness, and tormented by its burning. Ulysses and Diomed are also here united in punishment. The former, speaking through the Flame, relates the manner and place of his death.

Rejoice, O Florence, thou so great in pride,
Beating thy wings over the land and sea,
While throughout Hell thy name spreads far and wide!

Five such among the thieves were found by me, 4
Thy citizens, whereat shame pierced me through,
And no great honour cometh thence for thee.

But if the dreams that come with dawn be true, 7
It is not long ere thou wilt have to fear
All that not only Prato longs to do.

'Twould seem delayed though 'twere already here: 10
Ah! would it were, since come it must! Far more
'Twill weight my heart with every passing year.

We turned from thence, and up the stair which bore
Our footsteps down, the boundary wall of stone, 14
My leader drew me, mounting up before.

Then we pursued our road, so drear and lone, 16
Where hands must aid the feet to win way through,
The cliff so jagged and set with rocks was grown.

I sorrowed then and sorrow now anew, 19
As memory bids once more the vision rise;
Genius I curb more than I use to do,

Lest where no virtue leads perchance it flies; 22
So if kind stars, or any better thing
Have given me good, I'll grudge the gift nowise.

Like fireflies in the valley clustering, 25
Which the hind sees, when resting on the hill,
Perchance there where he ploughs, where his vines
cling,

What time the lamp whose rays our world can fill, 28
Conceals the least from us his face of light,
And the gnat rises and the fly is still;

E'en so with moving flames, each flashing bright, 31
Gleamed the eighth gulf, as well I saw from where
The depth thereof lay open to my sight.

As he who was avengèd by the bear 34
Saw how Elijah's chariot scaled the skies,
When fiery horses rose straight up i' the air,

Yet saw not all the glory with his eyes, 37
But as it were a solitary flame
Like to a little cloud to heav'n uprise;

So seemed in that dark fosse each one that came 40
Along its throat; its theft no flame there shows,
But each has stolen a sinner all the same.

Upon the bridge I stood to see, and rose 43
So far, had no kind rock a hand-grip lent,
I should have fallen without thrust or blows.

My guide, when that he saw me so intent, 46
Said, " Lo! within these flames are spirits caught,
" And each with that which burns is swathed and blent."

" Master," I answered, " that which was my thought
" Thy words make certain, for e'en now meseems 50
" I knew the truth, and will in me was wrought

" To ask thee, who is in that flame that streams 52

" Divided upwards, as though from the pyre

" Where the twin Theban brethren lay, it gleams? "

He answered me, " They suffer in that fire, 55

" Ulysses and his partner Diomed,

" Together in sin, together in torment dire.

" Within that flame they groan for that fell deed, 58

" The snare of the wooden horse, that was the gate

" Whence issued forth of noble Rome the seed.

" There too they pay for Deidamia's fate, 61

" By their arts dead, mourning Achilles still,

" There the Palladium they regret too late."

" If they within these sparks keep power and will 64

" To speak," I said, " O Master, now I pray

" One prayer with force a thousand prayers to fill,

" Do not deny me, but permit me stay, 67

" Till that horned flame come hither to our feet,

" Thou see'st towards it my longing makes me sway."

And he to me; " Thy prayer in sooth is meet 70

" For more than praise; I grant it; but refrain

" Thy tongue from speech, nor any words repeat,

" But let me speak; whereto thy heart is fain 73

" I well conceive, but these, since Greeks they were

" When they were men, thy speaking might disdain."

Soon as the flame had come as far as where 76
Both time and place seemed fitting to my guide,
Then words like these I heard him utter there.

“ Ye souls that two within one flame abide, 79
“ If while I lived I deserved well of you,
“ If my desert tow’rd you were small or wide,

“ When lofty verse on earth I strove to do, 82
“ Then pass not by, but let one soul make known
“ Where he found death, straying the wide world
through.”

The greater horn of the ancient flame alone 85
Began to shake itself and murmur low,
As fire that strives against the wind doth moan;

And then its summit darting to and fro, 88
As though it were a tongue that muttered fast,
Sent forth a voice and spake unto us; “ Lo!

“ More than a year near Gaeta I passed, 91
“ Before Aeneas named it, but from thence
“ Though Circe held me I escaped at last.

“ Not father’s love, nor filial reverence 94
“ For honoured age, nor all the joy I owed
“ To pay Penelope her love immense,

“ Could stay in me the ardour that abode 97
“ To gain a knowledge of all things that be,
“ Men’s worth, men’s wrong, and the world’s long dim
road.

" So forth I went on the deep open sea, 100
" With but one ship, and the few faithful found
" Who would not leave me—a small company.

" I saw both shores up to the Spanish ground, 103
" Far as Morocco and Sardinia's land,
" And all the isles the same sea washes round.

" Old men and slow were all who that ship manned, 106
" When in due time we reached the narrow way,
" Where Hercules had once his landmarks planned,

" All sons of men from further course to stay; 109
" Upon my leftward hand Ceuta I passed,
" And on the other side 'twas Seville lay.

" ' Brothers,' I cried, ' who to this west at last, 112
" ' Through hundred thousand perils now attain,
" ' To the brief vigil, short and overcast,

" ' That now of living senses doth remain, 115
" ' Do not deny to learn this knowledge new,
" ' The back of the sun, the world deprived of men.

" ' Consider all that to your race is due; 118
" ' Ye were not born as brutes to live and die,
" ' But gain in knowing and right deeds pursue.'

" So keen an eagerness the pass to try, 121
" My words inspired within my gallant band,
" No force could then have put their ardour by.

“{And with our poop turned tow’rds the morning land,
“ We made our oars wings for our folly’s flight, 125
“ Constantly gaining on the leftward hand.

“ Already all the stars were seen at night 127
“ That serve the other pole; and ours so low,
“ Out of the sea it barely rose to sight.

“ The lamp of light that ’neath the moon doth glow,
“ Five times was kindled and as many spent, 131
“ Since we began our high emprise; when lo!

“ A mountain dark that filled the firmament, 133
“ Gloomed through the distance, so exceeding high
“ I ne’er saw other that its bulk outwent.

“ We joyed thereat, but soon found misery; 136
“ From the new land its way a whirlwind wound,
“ And struck upon our ship’s prow suddenly;

“ Three times it made her with the waves spin round;
“ The fourth, the poop moved by another’s will
“ Was raised aloft, the prow thrust deep and drowned,

“ And o’er our heads the sea closed deep and still.” 142

CANTO XXVII

THE Flame of Ulysses, having told its story, departs with permission of Virgil; and is immediately followed by another, which contains the spirit of Count Guido da Montefeltro, a Ghibelline of high fame in war and counsel. It comes moaning at the top, and sends forth eager inquiries about the people of Romagna, Guido's countrymen. Dante describes their condition, under various petty Tyrants, in 1300. His words are brief, precise, and beautiful; and have a tone of large and deep sadness. Guido, at his request, relates who he is, and why condemned to such torment; after which, the Poets pass onwards to the bridge of the Ninth Chasm.

Erect and quiet was the fire-flame now,
Ceasing to speak, and left us wondering
When the sweet poet did his leave bestow;

And lo! another, closely following, 4
Unto its summit made us turn our eyes,
Through sounds confused throughout it issuing.

As the Sicilian bull, (whose bellowing cries 7
Came first from him—and that was meet and well—
Whose file had wrought it for such agonies),

Would bellow with the sufferer's voice, until 10
Although it was of brass it seemed distressed
With pain, resounding to the torment still;

So, since from out the fire it could not wrest 13
At first a way or outlet, every word
In language of the flame was first expressed.

But when it reached the point, and that was stirred 16
With the vibration which the tongue had given
As it passed upward, then it was we heard:

“ O thou, tow’rd whom my eager voice hath striven,
“ Who spake but now in Lombardwise to say, 20
“ ‘ Now go, no more to speech by me be driven; ’

“ If thou but newly to this kingdom blind, 22
“ From that dear Latin land art fallen down,
“ Whence all my guilt upon me I did bind;

“ Hath peace or war about Romagna grown? 25
“ For ’twixt Urbino and the range from where
“ The Tiber springs, lay mine own mountain town.”

Intent I still was, bending downward there, 28
When my good leader touched me on the side,
And said: “ Speak thou, for ’tis a Latian prayer.”

And I unto that soul no more denied 31
My answer—’twas in truth a ready one,
“ O soul, whom there below the flame doth hide,

“ In thy Romagna war was never done, 34
“ Nor is, within its tyrants’ hearts, but ere
“ Of late I left it open strife was none.

“ Ravenna stands now as for many a year, 37
“ Covering Cervia with its pinions’ shade,
“ Polenta’s eagle guards it, standing near.

“ The land by which the longdrawn proof was made 40
“ And bloody heap of Frenchmen, now anew
“ Feels the green Talons o’er its marches tread.

“ The old and young, Verrucchio’s mastiffs two, 43
“ Who ruled Montagna with so little good,
“ Yet ply their teeth where they were wont to do.

“ Lamone and Santerno well subdued, 46
“ The Lion of the Silver Shield doth guide,
“ Who changes parties with the season’s mood;

“ And where the Savio bathes the city’s side, 49
“ ’Twixt tyranny and freedom will it dwell,
“ E’en as ’twixt mount and plain it doth abide.

“ Now who thou art I conjure thee to tell; 52
“ Be not more hard than others are to thee,
“ So in the world thy name be honourable.”

Awhile, as erst, the flame roared mightily, 55
Its sharp point to and fro it moved, and then
Gave forth this breath, and so replied to me:

“ If that I thought to one who e’er again 58
“ Could see the world, my answer shall I give,
“ This flame should shake no more; but since ’tis vain,

- “ If truth I hear, to think that aught alive 61
“ From out this deep returns, no haunting fear
“ Of evil fame against my speech can strive.
- “ I was a man of arms; Cordelier 64
“ I then became, in hope my life to mend
“ Thus girt, and hope came to fruition near,
- “ But that the great priest, (evil be his end!) 67
“ Unto my first sins brought me back, and how
“ And why, I pray thee now thine ears to lend.
- “ While formed in bones and flesh I yet did grow 70
“ E’en as my mother made me, then my deed
“ Was of the fox, not lion-like, I trow.
- “ To wiles and hidden ways I gave such heed, 73
“ I knew them all, and practised till the sound
“ Unto the world’s end did in truth proceed.
- “ When that the time of life to me came round, 76
“ When every man should strike his vessel’s sail,
“ And gather in his ropes, then ’twas I found
- “ What erst had pleased me seemed an evil tale. 79
“ I turned to God confessing, penitent;
“ Ah me! for my salvation ’twould avail!
- “ The Prince of the new Pharisees, intent 82
“ On waging war near to the Lateran,
“ ’Gainst Saracens and Jews all negligent,

- “ (For every foe of his was Christian, 85
“ And none sought Acre as a conqueror,
“ Nor had 'i the Soldan's land been merchantman,)
- “ Regarded not the Highest Office, nor 88
“ His Holy Orders, nor that cord in me,
“ Whose wearers once grew leaner more and more.
- “ As Constantine to cure his leprosy, 91
“ Sought out Silvestro on Soracte's hill,
“ This man sought out my skill and mastery,
- “ To cure the fever of his pride; his will 94
“ Was to be counselled, but I held my peace,
“ For drunken seemed his words and sounding ill.
- “ And then he said: ‘ Thy doubting heart to ease, 97
“ ‘ E'en now do I absolve thee; teach me how
“ ‘ To act that Penestrino's power may cease.
- “ ‘ Heaven can I shut and open thou dost know, 100
“ ‘ For two the keys are which, for all their fame,
“ ‘ My predecessor valued all too low.’
- “ Then from the weighty arguments I came 103
“ To deem my silence ill, wherefore made bold,
“ ‘ Father, since thou dost cleanse me from the blame
- “ ‘ Of guilt to which I now must sink, behold! 106
“ ‘ Large promise with fulfilment small,’ I said,
“ ‘ Will bring thee triumph on the throne of old.’

" Saint Francis came for me when I was sped; 109

" But the black Cherubim gainsaid him there,

" One saying: ' Wrong me not; touch not my dead.

" ' He with my other knaves must downward fare, 112

" ' Because he gave the counsel fraudulent,

" ' Since when I've gripped him closely by the hair.

" ' Uncleansed is he who doth nowise repent; 115

" ' Clean contradiction makes the claim untrue,

" ' That man regrets the act on which he's bent.'

" O wretched me! What terror pierced me through 118

" When he caught at me saying: ' And dost thou find

" ' To thy surprise I deal in logic too? '

" He carried me to Minos, who entwined 121

" His tail eight times his dreadful back around,

" Then, biting it in fury, spake his mind:

" ' This sinner for the thieving fire is bound.' 124

" And therefore I am lost, as thou dost see,

" And grieve in heart thus vested to be found."

When thus were ended all his words to me, 127

The flame departed, sorely sorrowing,

Its sharp horn writhing, tossing fearfully.

I and my guide passed onward, journeying 130

Up to the other arch securely built

Above the fosse, which their reward doth bring

To those who, sowing discord, gather guilt. 133

CANTO XXVIII

OUR Pilgrim—more and more heavy-laden, yet rapid and unconquerable—is now with his Guide looking down into the Ninth Chasm; and briefly describes the hideous condition of the “sowers of Scandal and Schism” that are punished in it. First comes Mahomet: in Dante's view, a mere Sectarian who had taken up Christianity and perverted its meaning. The shadow of him, rent asunder from the chin downwards, displays the conscious vileness and corruption of his doctrines. He tells how Ali his nephew “goes weeping before him, cleft from chin to forelock.” He then asks what Dante is doing there; and on learning his errand and the likelihood of his return to earth, bids him give due warning to “Brother Dolcino,” a Schismatic and Communist, who is stirring up strife in Piedmont and Lombardy. Next come Pier da Medicina, Curio, Mosca de' Lamberti of Florence, and lastly, Bertran de Born. All of them have punishments representing their crimes.

Who ever, even with his words set free
By oft relating them, could ever tell
Fully, the blood and wounds I now must see?

Assuredly all tongues of men would fail, 4
Because our speech and memory are wrought
Too small, to grasp so much and hold it well.

If all the people were together brought 7
Who once upon Apulia's fateful land
Grieved for their blood in anguish, when they fought

The Trojans; and that long war's mighty band, 10
When such vast spoil of golden rings was made,
As Livy writes, with sure unerring hand;

With those 'gainst Robert Guiscard once arrayed, 13
Who felt the pain of wounds, and all the rest
Whose bones are still within the grave-mound laid

At Ceperano, where were manifest 16
Apulia's traitors; Tagliacozzo too
Where, weaponless, old Alard proved the best;

And then, if one should show his limbs pierced
through, 19
Another, his cut off; 'twere nought beside
The horror which the ninth gulf brought to view.

One saw I, (never cask did yawn so wide 22
Through lack of middle piece or cant,) down-ripped
From chin to breech; his entrails I espied

Hang down between his legs, which o'er them tripped;
Heart, lungs, and liver showed, and that vile sack 26
Which foulness makes of what therein is slipped.

I stood and gazed at him, who then looked back, 28
And with his hands opened his breast and said:
" Now see how I myself myself attack;

" See now Mahomet, torn, discomfited! 31
" Before me Ali, weeping, aye must go,
" From chin to forelock cleft, a thing of dread;

" And all the others whom thou here shalt know, 34

" Sowers of scandal and of schism were

" In life, and therefore these great clefts they show.

" A devil splits us in this manner here 37

" So cruelly; each of us hath to face

" His sword's keen edge, our executioner,

" When we have wandered round the dolorous ways;

" For ere before him any goes again, 41

" The wounds are healed and leave no sort of trace.

" But who art thou, who musest on our pain, 43

" Perchance delaying ere the punishment

" Fall on thee, which thy accusations gain? "

" He knows not death, nor by his guilt is sent 46

" To suffering," thereon my Master said,

" But his great need of knowledge to content,

" Needs must I lead him, I, a shadow dead, 49

" Throughout all Hell, onward from round to round;

" And this is truth whereof my words are made."

More than a hundred, at his speech's sound, 52

Stood in the fosse to look at me, so strong

Was wonder, each forgot his grievous wound.

" Well, thou who may'st behold the sun ere long, 55

" Bid Fra Dolcino take supplies of food,

" (Unless he wishes soon to join this throng),

" Lest through the stress of snow he be subdued, 58
" And so the Novarese shall win the day,
" Which else 'twere doubtful if they ever could."

With one foot lifted up to go away 61
Mahomet said this; then he turned anew,
And strode along as one who might not stay.

Another one, who had his throat pierced through, 64
And nose cut off to where the eyebrows spring,
And but one ear remaining of the two,

Who like the rest was staring, wondering, 67
Before the rest opened his windpipe clear,
Round all of which the smearing red did cling,

And said: " Thou, who no weight of sin need'st fear,
" Whom I have seen on Latian ground, I know, 71
" Unless too great resemblance tricks me here,

" Recall Pier da Medicina's woe, 73
" If e'er thou see once more the gentle plain,
" That from Vercelli slopes to Marcabò.

" And unto Fano's two most worthy men, 76
" To Angiolello and to Guido tell,
" That if our foresight here be else than vain,

" They, by the treachery of a tyrant fell, 79
" Shall both be cast without their ship, and drowned
" Near the Cattolica, where surges swell.

" 'Twixt Cyprus' island and Majorca's ground, 82
" Neptune ne'er saw a greater crime, not e'en
" With pirates of the Argive race renowned.

" The traitor who one-eyed long time hath been, 85
" (Who holds the land, which one soul with me now
" Might wish in truth that he had never seen),

" Will bid them to a parley; then I trow 88
" Will act so that for all Focara's wind,
" They never more will need or prayer or vow."

And I: " Now show me, if thou hast a mind 91
" I carry tidings of thee up anon,
" Who 'tis that there such bitterness doth find."

Then on the jaw of one companion 94
He laid his hand, opened his mouth and said;
" This is he, and his power of speech is gone;

" For Caesar's doubts were by this outcast made 97
" To yield, when he affirmed that men, prepared
" To act, must suffer for the act delayed."

Ah me! how downcast Curio appeared, 100
When in his throat the tongue was cut away,
Which once in speaking such bold counsel dared.

And one with both hands lopped began to pray, 103
The stumps upraising through the dim air, till
Their blood defiled his face with spurting spray;

“ That Mosca too, thou’lt recognise full well, 106
“ Who said: ‘ A thing done hath an end,’ ah me!
“ Which to the Tuscan race was seed of ill.”

“ And death,” I added, “ to thy family; ” 109
Whereat as one nigh mad and sore distressed,
With pain piled on to pain, departed he.

But I remained to look on all the rest, 112
And saw that which to tell I’d hardly dare,
Without more proof than here can be possessed,

Except that conscience reassures me e’er, 115
That comrade good, which maketh strong in fight
The men who armour of clear truth can wear :

In sooth I saw, and yet behold the sight, 118
A trunk without a head, that journeyed where
Went all the others in their dismal plight.

The severed head, suspended by the hair, 121
Was like a lantern swinging in his hand ;
“ O me! ” it said, and looked upon us there.

It made itself a lamp in that sad land, 124
And they were one in two and two in one;
How? He doth know Who giveth such command.

When to our bridge’s base it now had gone, 127
It raised its arm on high, bearing the head,
And so its words came near to us anon:

- " O thou, who breathing goest to view the dead, 130
" Look well upon this grievous penalty,
" Is any one so great can it be said?

" And that thou mayest bear back news of me, 133
" Bertran de Born I am, I bid thee know,
" Who counselled once the young king evilly.

" War between son and father made I grow; 136
" No worse on Absalom and David could
" Ahithophel's malicious tongue bestow.

" Because united ones I set at feud, 139
" My brain, ah me! I carry severed clean
" Now from this trunk, whereon before it stood.

" Thus retribution's law in me is seen." 142

CANTO XXIX

THE numberless Shadows of discord and bloody strife have filled the Poet's eyes with tears; and he still keeps gazing down, expecting to find his own father's cousin, Geri del Bello, among them. Virgil makes him quit the miserable spectacle; and tells, as they go on, how he had seen Geri, at the foot of the bridge, pointing with angry gesture, and then departing in the crowd. From the arch of the Tenth Chasm, Dante now hears the wailings of a new class of sinners, the last in Malebolge. They are the Falsifiers of every sort: punished with innumerable diseases, in impure air and darkness. Pietro di Dante enumerates three classes of Falsifiers: in things, in deeds, and in words. Of the first class are the Alchemists, Forgers, etc., such as Griffolino of Arezzo, and Capocchio of Siena, in the present canto, and Adamo da Brescia in the next,—where we shall also find the other two classes.

The many men, their diverse woundings deep,
Made my poor eyes so drunken, that my will
Would well have longed thereat to stand and weep.

But Virgil said: "Why art thou gazing still? 4
"Why is thy sight so fixedly down-bent
"Upon the mangled shadows miserable?

"No other fosse has made thee thus intent; 7
"Remember, if to number them thou'st thought,
"Two miles and twenty round this vale are spent,

" And 'neath our feet e'en now the moon is brought; 10
" Short time is granted to us yet, and more
" Remains to see than this wherewith thou'rt caught."

" Had'st thou," I answered, " stayed to see wherefore
" It was I gazed, perchance wouldst not deny 14
" Brief waiting time, ere passed our footsteps o'er."

My guide was hastening on; to my reply, 16
E'en as I followed him, I added this:
" Within that cavern which so held mine eye,

" When thou reproachedst me with slothfulness, 19
" I deem a spirit of my blood doth weep
" The guilt which there exacts such miseries."

Then said my lord: " Thy mind henceforward
keep 22

" Free from the thought of him; turn thou away
" Elsewhere, and leave him in the valley's deep;

" For at the bridge's foot I saw him stay, 25
" Point at thee, threatening with his finger there;
" Geri del Bello 'twas, I heard them say.

" But all absorbed just then thy senses were 28
" By him who once held Altaforte, so
" He went away, and thou beheld'st him ne'er."

" O guide, his violent death, which still must go 31
" All unavenged," I said, " by any one
" Who shares his shame, and its disgrace doth know,

" Moved him to anger; therefore he is gone, 34
" I trow, without a word to me, thereby
" To greater pity moving me alone."

With this we reached the first place presently, 37
Where from the ridge, if there had been more light,
The other valley's depths our eyes could try.

When thus we saw, standing upon the height, 40
The last dim cloister Malebolge knows,
When its lay brethren were revealed to sight,

Laments a many from the depths uprose, 43
Whose shafts all barbed with pity were, until
Mine ears with both my hands I covered close.

If all in Valdichiana lying ill 46
Between September and July were ta'en,
Maremma's and Sardinia's as well,

In one sad pit together, lo! such pain 49
As would be there, was here, and dreadfully
It stank, as do the gangrened limbs of men.

Down the last bank of that long ridgeway, we 52
Again toward the leftward made descent,
And then more vivid vision grew for me,

To depths where she, the Great Lord's ministrant, 55
Justice unerring, numbereth with care
The falsifiers for their punishment.

Not e'en Aegina's sorrows greater were, 58
I think, when all her people grew infirm,
When filled so full of evil was the air,

That every beast, even the little worm, 61
Dropped down; and afterward the ancient race,
(Or so the faith of poets doth affirm),

From seed of ants renewed its former grace; 64
Then were the woes through that dim valley shown,
Where heaped with spirits was the dreadful place;

This on his belly lay, and that one thrown 67
Across the other's shoulders, and a third
Along the dolorous path was crawling down;

And step by step we went and said no word, 70
Listening, and on the sufferers intent,
Who seemed as though they never could be stirred.

I noted two who on each other leant, 73
As pan on pan to warm them men will lean;
With scabs from head to foot were both besprent;

Truly no currycomb I've ever seen 76
So plied by lads who know their master's waiting,
Or those who longing for repose have been,

As on himself each one unhesitating 79
Plied there the tearing of his frenzied nails,
Through the fierce itch, which else knows no abating.

And as a knife draws from a bream the scales, 82
Or from a fish where they are larger, thus
Their talons drew the scurf which never fails.

“ O thou who with thy fingers furious 85
“ Unmailest thee,” to one began my guide,
“ And makest pincers of them, tell to us

“ If among these who here within abide 88
“ Be any Latians, so eternally
“ Thy nails suffice for that whereto they’re tried.”

“ Both of us thus disfigured, even we 91
“ Are Latians,” answered weeping one below,
“ But thou who questionest, who may’st thou be? ”

And my guide said: “ One am I who must go 94
“ Downward from cliff to cliff, that I may teach
“ This living man what Hell will bid him know.”

Then broke their mutual support, and each 97
Turned trembling unto me, and others there
To whom the echo of the words did reach.

Then the kind master, giving all his care 100
To me, said, “ Tell them what thou wishest then.”
And I began, doing his will as e’er:

“ That memory of you from minds of men 103
“ May not be lost in our first world, but may
“ ’Neath many suns to fullest life attain,

“ What was your race? Who were ye in your day? 106

“ Let not your vile and loathsome punishment

“ Make you from full confession start away.”

“ I from Arezzo was,” said one, “ and went 109

“ Through Albergo of Siena to the fire;

“ But what I died for hath not hither sent.

“ ’Tis true I said in jest that for his hire, 112

“ I’d raise myself into the air and fly;

“ And he, of little wit and fond desire,

“ Bade me show him the art, and since that I 115

“ Made him not Daedalus, he had me burned

“ By him whose son he was, revengefully.

“ But ’twas the alchemy I used and learned 118

“ Above, which this last hollow of the ten

“ By Minos’ never-failing judgment earned.”

“ Now was there e’er a people quite so vain 121

“ As are the Sienese? ” Thereat I said,

“ Truly to far less heights the French attain.”

Thereat the other leper answerèd, 124

Who heard me well: “ Except for Stricca, who

“ Into such moderate expense was led,

“ And Niccolò, who first devised the new 127

“ And costly use of cloves i’ the garden where

“ Such seed takes ready root, and save the crew

- " Mid which his vineyard and his forest fair 130
" Caccia d'Asciano squandered, and
" The Abbagliato showed his wit so rare.
- " But now sharp-sighted let my face be scanned; 133
" To answer rightly then who seconds thee
" Against Siena thou wilt understand.
- " Capocchio's shade so shalt thou know in me, 136
" Whose alchemy made metals false, and now
" Thou must recall, if well thy face I see,
- " How close I aped what Nature doth bestow." 139

CANTO XXX

STILL on the brim of the Tenth Chasm, in which new horrors await us. "Here," says the *Ottimo Com.*, "all the senses are assailed: the sight, by murky air (*se più lume vi fosse*, etc.); the ear, by lamentations that 'have arrows shod with pity'; the smell, by stench of 'putrid limbs'; the touch, by hideous scurf, and by the sinners lying on one another; and the taste, by thirst that 'craves one little drop of water,' " etc. Here Gianni Schicchi of Florence, and Myrrha, who counterfeited the persons of others for wicked purposes, represent the Falsifiers "in deeds;" Sinon and Potiphar's wife, the Falsifiers "in words." The canto ends with a dialogue between Master Adam of Brescia and Sinon, who strike and abuse each other with a grim scorn and zeal. Dante gets a sharp and memorable reproof from Virgil, for listening too eagerly to their base conversation.

When Juno 'gainst the Theban race enraged
Through Semele, who moved her high disdain,
Felt anger, shown before, yet unassuaged;

Then 'twas that Athamas grew so insane, 4
That when he saw his wife go gently by,
Who in each hand one of his sons had ta'en,

"Spread out the nets, the lioness thereby 7
"And whelps, within the pass I'll catch," he cried;
And then with ruthless claws spread, presently,

One named Learchus seized he in his pride 10
And whirling dashed against a rock the boy;
And she with the other drowned herself and died;

And when the ever daring pride of Troy 13
Was brought to the dust, the kingdom and the king,
Which Fortune's shattering blows did then destroy,

Poor Hecuba, a captive sorrowing, 16
When slain Polyxena she saw, and when
The sight of Polydorus came to wring

Her wretched heart, upon the sea shore then 19
Mad, like a dog she barked; her soul distraught
Was so from nature wrenched by grief and pain:

But Theban Furies ne'er, nor Trojan, wrought 22
Torment so cruel on a brute, much less
On human limbs, as was before me brought,

When shadows two, pale in their nakedness, 25
Ran biting, as when thrust from out the sty,
The swine will run biting amid the press.

One on Capocchio fell and terribly 28
Bit in his neck, and then the ground he made
To tear his belly as he dragged him by.

The Aretine, who trembling stayed, then said: 31
"Gianni Schicchi is that goblin, who
"Goes mangling others, by his madness led,"

I answered: " So the other may not too 34
" Set teeth in thee, be willing now to tell
" Its name before it vanishes anew."

And he: " There doth the ancient spirit dwell 37
" Of sinful Myrrha, who with love far more
" Than rightful is, her father loved too well;

" She falsified the form which else she wore, 40
" And came to sin with him, disguised; as he
" Who there slinks off, one time a semblance bore

" To counterfeit Buoso Donati 43
" Making a will and legal testament,
" To win the Lady of the company."

And when the raging pair of spirits went 46
Away, on whom I kept my gaze, I sought
To see the others, ill born, malcontent.

And one shaped like a lute my vision caught, 49
Had but his groin been lopped off at the place
Where man to his divided limbs is wrought.

The grievous dropsy which with such ill grace 52
Of undigested humour makes man grow,
Until the belly matches not the face,

Made him to hold his lips apart, e'en so 55
As will a hectic one who curls in thirst
Upward one lip, one toward his chin below,

- " O ye who are, in this grim world accursed, 58
" Unpunished (why I know not)," said he then,
" Look and attend, if either of you durst,
- " To Master Adam's misery and pain; 61
" In life enough I had of all my will,
" Now crave one drop of water all in vain.
- " The little brooks that from the fair green hill 64
" Of Casentino down to Arno stray,
" So cool and moist the channel of each rill,
- " Are aye before me; not for nought they stay; 67
" For th' image of them dries me up far more
" Than the disease which wastes my face away.
- " The rigid Justice searching me so sore, 70
" Takes cause to give more speed unto my sighing,
" From where I sinned when in the life before.
- " Romana 'tis where I lived falsifying 73
" The alloy, stamped with the Baptist, for which thing
" I left my body burnt on earth, in dying.
- " But could I Guido's wretched soul here bring, 76
" Or Alexander's or their brother's see,
" I would not give the sight for Branda's spring.
- " One is already in, if truth it be 79
" The raging wandering souls have spoken, yet
" With these bound limbs what profit is't to me?

CANTO XXX

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“ If I were only just so light, to let 82
 “ Me move one inch within a hundred year,
 “ Already on the track I should be set,

“ Amid this people foul to seek him here, 85
 “ Though ’tis eleven miles in circuit round,
 “ And half a mile across its breadth I fear.

“ Through them am I in such a household found; 88
 “ ’Twas they induced me stamp the florins, those
 “ To which three carats of alloy were bound.”

And I; “ Who are the abject two who close 91
 “ To thy right side, lying outstretched I see,
 “ Who smoke like the wet land in winter does? ”

“ When I rained down into this fold,” said he, 94
 “ I found them here, since then they have not turned,
 “ Nor will, I think, to all Eternity.

“ One Joseph’s false accuser, whom he spurned, 97
 “ And one the Greek from Troy, false Sinon, is.
 “ They reek thus since their fever long hath burned.”

And one of them, perchance in wrathfulness 100
 To be thus darkly named, smote hard and straight
 The rigid belly with his fist, at this.

Like to a drum it sounded then; thereat 103
 Did Master Adam strike him in the face,
 And with an arm of no less driving weight,

Saying to him: " Though rooted in this place 106
" Through limbs too heavy, yet if need require
" I have an arm left free for such affrays."

He answered: " When thou wentest to the fire 109
" 'Twas not so ready, but as quick to do
" And more, when coining was thy sole desire."

Thereon the dropsied one: " That word is true, 112
" But when at Troy they asked for honesty,
" Thou gavest witness of far other hue."

" If I spake false, false coin was made by thee," 115
Said Sinon, " One crime only I bewail,
" But thine beyond all other demons' be."

" Think of the horse, thou perjured one, and quail,"
He of the swollen belly made reply, 119
" And writhe to think the whole world knows the tale."

" Writhe thou for thirst that cracks thy tongue so dry,"
The Greek said, " and for that foul water whence 122
" Thy belly grows a hedge before mine eye."

The coiner then: " For speaking of offence, 124
" As it is wont, thy mouth gapes wide again;
" For if I thirst and humour stuffs me tense,

" Thou hast the burning of thy head in pain, 127
" And could thy tongue Narcissus' mirror know,
" 'Twould not need many words to make thee fain,"

Listening I stood, intent to hear, when lo! 130
My Master said: "Now feed thine eager gaze
"A little more, and I shall be thy foe."

When thus I felt wrath in his speaking blaze, 133
I turned to him with such deep shame, that still
The memory thereof my spirit sways.

And as one dreams perchance of threatening ill, 136
And dreaming longs that it might be a dream,
And on what is, as 'twere not, sets his will,

So then was I, who could not speak to him. 139
I longed to plead my cause and knew not then
How all the while I sought his lost esteem.

"A greater fault than thine could cleansing gain," 142
The Master said, "with lesser shame; therefore
"Let sorrow's load from off thy heart be ta'en.

"Think that I am beside thee evermore, 145
"If Fortune ever chance to guide thy ways"
"Where in like contests folk are busy, for

"The wish to listen is a wish that's base." 148

CANTO XXXI

THE Poets now mount up, and cross the bank which separates the last chasm of the Malebolge from the Central Pit, or Ninth Circle, wherein Satan himself is placed. The air is thick and gloomy (*Zech.* xiv. 6, 7; *Rev.* ix. 2); so that Dante can see but little way before him. The sound of a horn, louder than any thunder, suddenly attracts all his attention; and, looking in the direction from which it comes, he dimly discerns the figures of huge Giants standing round the edge of the Pit. These are the proud rebellious Nephilim and "mighty men which were of old," etc. (*Gen.* vi. 4); "giants groaning under the waters" (*Job* xxvi. 5, *Vulg.*); "sons of earth" who made open war against Heaven. The first of them is Nimrod of Babel, who shouts in perplexed unintelligible speech, and is himself a mass of stupidity and confusion: for Dante elsewhere (*Vulg. Elog.* i. 7) tells how "man, under persuasion of the Giant, took upon him to surpass Nature and the Author of Nature" on the plain of Shinar, and was baffled and confounded. After seeing him, the Poets turn to the left hand, and go along the brim of the Pit till they come to Ephialtes; and then to Antaeus, who takes them in his arms and sets them down "into the bottom of all guilt," or lowest part of Hell, where eternal cold freezes and locks up Cocytus, the marsh (*Canto* xiv. 119) that receives all its rivers.

One and the same tongue first had come to wound
Me, till both cheeks with red were painted o'er,
And then the medicine of healing found.

The lance Achilles and his father bore,
Possessed, as I have heard, this double gift,
To heal in joy the woe it wrought before.

The wretched vale behind our backs we left, 7
And climbed the bank that girds its dismal plight,
And crossed it, of all further speech bereft.

Here less than day there was and less than night, 10
So that I saw before me little space,
But a high horn I heard, of such great might

There is no thunder that 'twould not efface; 13
And this, turning them 'gainst itself to see,
Wrought mine eyes wholly to one single place.

After the rout that ended grievously 16
The sacred deed which Charles the Great had planned,
The horn of Roland blared less terribly.

Facing that side, I seemed to understand 19
Ere long that many lofty towers arose,
Whence I: "O Master, say, what is this land;"

And he to me: "Because thy vision goes 22
"Seeking to pierce too far this shadowy air,
"In thy imagining an error grows.

"Well wilt thou see when thou arrivest there, 25
"How much, when distant, is the sight misled,
"Wherefore the spur I bid thee not to spare."

Then lovingly he took my hand and said: 28
"That the reality may less astound
"Thee, know, before our further course is sped,

" These are not towers but giants, and around 31
" The bank they stand, within the well, where all
" Their bodies from the navel down are found."

As when there melts away a mist-cloud's wall, 34
The glance, little by little, shapeth clear
The things erst hidden 'neath the vapour's pall,

So, as we drew toward the bank more near, 37
Piercing the thick air with dark shadows sown,
Error took flight, and greater grew my fear.

For e'en as Montereccion doth crown 40
With towers its circling wall, so turreting
With half their bodies the great bank that's thrown

Around the well, the dreadful giants' ring 43
Stood there, whom Jove still threatens in their pride,
When from the heaven rolls his thundering.

The face of one already I descried, 46
His shoulders, breast, the belly in great part,
And down along his flanks, both arms beside.

Nature in truth did well to leave the art 49
Of making brutes like these, when Mars forewent
Such executioners as please his heart.

And if for whales she doth no wise repent, 52
Nor elephants, who subtly looks, must see
More just and wise therein is her intent;

For where to evil will and potency, 55
The Power of Reason is allowed to mate,
Can no defence of man availing be.

His face to me appeared as long and great 58
As is Saint Peter's pine at Rome, and all
His other bones were made proportionate;

Wherefore the bank, which from his midst did fall 61
Down like an apron, showed above it there
So much, that all in vain three Frisians tall

Would boast, if they had claimed to reach his hair; 64
For downward from the place where clasps a man
His cloak, thirty great spans of him there were.

"Rafel mai amech zabi almi," began 67
That savage mouth to cry, which was not fit
For psalmody of any sweeter plan.

"Keep to thy horn, unpack thy heart with it, 70
"Thou foolish soul;" toward him spake my guide;
"If rage or other passion touch thee yet.

"Search on thy neck the belt that holds it tied, 73
"Then wilt thou find and see, O soul confused,
"It girds thy mighty breast from side to side."

Then unto me: "Behold him self-accused; 76
"For this is Nimrod, through whose evil thought
"One language in the world is no more used.

"Leave we him standing and not speak for nought; 79
"For every language is to him as his
"To others, which none understands a jot."

We made a further journeying at this 82
Leftward, and at a bowshot's distance found
One huger far, of greater savageness.

I know not who the master was who bound 85
And girt him, but his right arm was held fast
Behind, the left arm fixed in front, for round

About him went a chain, which five times passed 88
O'er all the part uncovered to the eye,
From the neck downwards round him it was cast.

"This proud one thought his mightiness to try 91
"Against high Jove himself," my leader said,
"Thence hath he this reward eternally.

"His name Ephialtes; great attempts he made, 94
"When in the gods the giants wrought such fear;
"The arms he moved then ever since are stayed."

And I to him: "May it be granted here 97
"That eyes of mine to knowledge should attain
"Of huge Briareus and see him near."

"Antaeus thou shalt see," he answered then, 100
"And near, who speaks and is unchained, who will
"Bring us unto the depths of sin and pain.

" He whom thou wouldest see is farther still 103

" Beyond, and bound even as is this one,

" Save that more fierceness doth his aspect fill."

And Ephialtes shook himself thereon 106

With greater force than ever shook a tower,

Moved by the mightiest earthquake man hath known.

Death feared I more than ever in that hour; 109

And death had surely come to me through dread,

Had I not seen the fetters and their power.

A little further yet our course we sped, 112

And to Antaeus came, who from the cave

Came forth five ells and more, besides his head.

" O thou who in that fateful vale, (which gave 115

" To Scipio such heritage of fame,

" When Hannibal in utter rout he drave,)

" A thousand lions for thy prey couldst claim; 118

" Through whom, if thou hadst with thy brethren
been

" At the great war, men deem perchance the shame

" Of fell defeat earth's sons had never seen; 121

" Hold not back now, but set us down below

" Where is Cocytus bound by frost breath keen.

" To Tityos nor to Typhon make us go; 124

" This man can give what here is hungered for;

" Wherefore bend down, nor scornful visage show.

“ Thy earthly fame he can again restore; 127
“ He lives and doth long life await, unless
“ Grace call him ere his time be all passed o’er.”

So said the Master; and in eagerness 130
Antaeus took my guide with hands outspread,
Hands whereof Hercules once felt the stress.

“ Come hither, let me hold thee,” Virgil said, 133
Soon as he felt their grasp; himself and me
Into one burden thereupon he made.

Such as the Carisenda is to see 136
Beneath the leaning side, when drifts a cloud
Above, so that it hangeth contrary,

So seemed Antaeus when I saw him bowed 139
From where I stood, and then I longed at last
That any other road had been allowed.

But gently down, where for a prey is cast 142
Judas with Lucifer, he placed us then,
Nor lingered he thus bent, but like the mast

Within a ship, he raised himself again. 145

CANTO XXXII

THIS Ninth and Last, or frozen Circle, lowest part of the Universe, and farthest remote from the Source of all light and heat, divides itself into four concentric Rings. The First or outermost is the Caïna, which has its name from Cain who slew his brother Abel, and contains the sinners who have done violence to their own kindred. The Second or Antenora, so called "from Antenor the Trojan, betrayer of his country" (Pietro di Dante, etc.), is filled with those who have been guilty of treachery against their native land. Dante finds many of his own countrymen, both Guelfs and Ghibellines, in these two rings; and learns the names of those in the First from Camiccion de' Pazzi, and of those in the Second from Bocca degli Abati. He has a very special detestation of Bocca, through whose treachery so many of the Guelfs were slaughtered, and "every family in Florence thrown into mourning;" and, as the *Ottimo* remarks, "falls into a very rude method, that he has used to no other spirit." The canto leaves him in the Antenora beside two sinners that are frozen close together in the same hole.

If rhymes of accent rough and harsh were mine,
Such as befit the hollow of distress,
On which the other steeps their weight combine,

The juice of my conception I would press 4
Yet more; but since none have I of such worth,
Some fear before this task I must confess;

For 'tis no enterprise of easy mirth, 7
This deepest depth of all the universe,
To show in any babbling tongue of earth.

But may those Ladies aid me in my verse, 10
Who helped Amphion raise Thebes' wall of fame,
Lest from the fact my words be too diverse.

Ye rabble miscreated! E'en to name 13
Your place is hard; had ye been goats or sheep
On earth, far lesser now had been your shame.

When we were plunged within that darkness deep 16
Beneath the giant's feet, much lower still,
And still I gazed upon the rampart steep,

I heard one say: "Now heed thy going well, 19
"Lest with thy weary wretched brethren near,
"Thy feet unto their heads should fashion ill."

With that I turned, and saw in front appear 22
And 'neath my feet, a lake, that seemed no more
Water, but glass, frozen so hard and clear.

Ne'er deem I was so thick a veil cast o'er 25
The Austrian Danube, nor Tanais lone
That 'neath the icy sky its flood doth pour,

As there was here; if Tambernica were thrown 28
Upon it, or Pietrapana e'en,
Not at the very edge the ice would groan.

And as the frog when croaking may be seen 31
With snout above the pool, when in her bed
The peasant woman dreams she goes to glean,

So, livid up to where shame's hue is shed, 34
The doleful shades within the ice were caught,
And with their teeth, like storks, they chattered.

Downward each held his face, and there methought 37
The mouth proclaimed the cold, and by the eyes
The sorrow of the heart to light was brought.

When I had gazed around in searching wise, 40
I looked and at my feet saw two close pressed,
The locks blent past all cunning to devise.

" Oh ye who strain each to the other's breast, 43
" Tell me your names," I said; their necks they bent
And when they had raised their faces to my quest,

Their eyes, whose moisture erst within was pent, 46
Gushed through the lids, but all the tears by cold
Were bound, and thus fast sealed the flow was spent.

Wood girt to wood no clamp did ever hold 49
So firm; they butted as two he-goats might,
Their wrath being greater than could be controlled.

And one, whose ears were both consumèd quite 52
By the harsh frost, holding his head still low,
Said: " Why toward us so steadfast is thy sight?

" If who these two are thou desir'st to know, 55
" Bisenzio's vale once saw their power extend,
" And knew their father Albert well, I trow.

" One mother theirs; through all Caïna wend, 58
" Search as thou may'st, thou wilt not find a shade
" More worthy in this frozen glue to end;

" Not him through whom the thrust of Arthur's blade
" Through breast and shadow in one moment came, 62
" Not Focaccia, not this one whose head

" Stayeth my vision, and in sooth his fame 64
" Is known to thee, if Tuscan be thy race,
" For Sassol Mascheroni is his name.

" And lest of further speech thou beg my grace, 67
" Camicion de Pazzi know in me,
" Waiting Carlino's favour in this place,"

A thousand doggish faces did I see 70
Shaped by the cold, making for evermore
That icy pass a shuddering memory.

As tow'rds the midmost space our course we bore, 73
Whereunto all things' weights together run,
And in the eternal dark I trembled sore,

Whether by fate or fortune it were done 76
I know not, but as 'mid the heads I went,
My foot struck full upon the face of one.

" Why tread'st me down? " In tears his rage he spent.
" Unless thou com'st the vengeance to increase 80
" For Montaperti, why dost thou torment? "

I said: " O Master mine, if it may please, 82
" Wait, that my doubt herein to rest be laid,
" Then, as thou wilt, our haste no more shall cease."

My leader stood; then I addressed that shade 85
Who still most bitterly reviled me: " Who
" Art thou, for such reproaches not afraid? "

" Nay who art thou, goest Antenora through 88
" Smiting the cheeks of others so," said he,
" As were too much, wert thou alive, to do? "

" I am alive," I said, " and that may be, 91
" If fame thou seekest, precious in thine eyes,
" If with the rest of note I tell of thee."

And he: " My longing is full otherwise; 94
" So pester me no more, but go thy way;
" Thou hast no cunning here in flatteries."

At that I grasped his scalp and straight did say: 97
" See now, thy name thou surely shalt declare,
" Or not a hair upon thy head shall stay."

Then he: " Although thou uproot every hair 100
" I will not tell thee, nor thy wish make good,
" Though thousand times thy worst my head must
bear."

I held his locks twisted in savage mood, 103
And more than one tuft then away I tore,
And he with eyes cast down, barking, withstood,

When cried a voice: " Bocca, what ails thee more?
" Do not thy chattering jaws suffice for thee, 107
" That thou must bark? What fiend torments thee
sore? "

" Now," said I, " need'st thou not to speak to me, 109
" Traitor most foul, for to thine endless shame
" I'll bear true tidings what thy torments be."

" Go hence," he answered, " what thou wilt, proclaim,
" But if thou dost get out, do not forget 113
" This all too ready tongue, but tell his name.

" Here for the Frenchman's silver does he fret. 115
" ' Him of Duera,' thou canst truly swear,
" ' Where sinners stand preserved in ice, I met.'

" If thou be asked what other souls were there, 118
" Beside thee Beccheria torment knows,
" Whose throat was cut by Florence city fair.

" Gianni de Soldaniero is with those 121
" Beyond, with Tribaldell' and Ganellon
" Who, while Faenza slept, let in its foes."

Already we had left him all alone, 124
And saw two victims more in one hole packed,
Till one head seemed a cap on the other grown.

And as a man chews bread, by hunger racked, 127
There, where the nape is joined unto the brain,
The one the other with his teeth attacked.

Tydeus not otherwise for wrath was fain 130
To gnaw the bone of Menalippus' head,
Than he the skull and other parts amain.

"O thou, whose brutish action shows," I said, 133
"Thy hate tow'rd him thou holdest in this plight,
"Now tell me why, and I will grant instead,

"That if thou justify thee in my sight, 136
"I, knowing who ye are, and what his sin,
"Yet in the world above will do thee right,

"If that I speak with be not dried within." 139

CANTO XXXIII

" WHEREWITHAL a man sinneth, by the same also shall he be punished " (*quia per quae peccat quis, per hoc et torquetur*), is the unalterable law which Dante sees written—not only in the ancient Hebrew records, but in every part of the Universe. The sinners whom he here finds frozen together in one hole are Count Ugolino and Archbishop Ruggieri (Roger) of Pisa, traitors both; and Ruggieri has the Shadow of Ugolino's hunger gnawing upon him in the eternal ice, while Ugolino has the image of his own base treachery and hideous death continually before him. He lifts up his head from the horrid meal, and pauses, when Dante recalls to him his early life, in the same way as the storm paused for Francesca; and the Archbishop is silent as Paolo. After leaving Ugolino, the Poets go on to the Third Ring or Ptolomaea, which takes its name from the Ptolomaeus (1 *Maccab.* xvi. 11, etc.) who " had abundance of silver and gold," and " made a great banquet " for his father-in-law Simon the high priest and his two sons; and " when Simon and his sons had drunk largely," treacherously slew them " in the banqueting place." Friar Alberigo and Branca d'Oria are found in it.

From his fierce meal the sinner raised uncloyed
His mouth, and wiped it on the clustering hair
Upon the head whose back he had destroyed.

Then he began: " The grief my heart must bear 4
So desperate 'tis, this thing thou would'st renew,
That ere I speak within my thought 'tis there.

- “ But if my words may be as seeds I strew, 7
“ To bear shame’s fruit to this gnawed traitor now,
“ To speak and weep is what thou’lt see me do.
- “ I know not who thou art, nor know I how 10
“ Thy steps were led down hither, but to me
“ Listening, it seems that Florentine art thou.
- “ Count Ugolino I, and show to thee 13
“ Archbishop Ruggieri, and will tell
“ Why unto him I am thus neighbourly.
- “ No need is there to say what men know well, 16
“ How I who trusted him, thereby was caught
“ Through his vile plans, and so to death I fell.
- “ But all of which no knowledge has been brought 19
“ To light, the cruel death I lingered through,
“ Now hear, and judge if great offence was wrought.
- “ A narrow hole that’s pierced within the mew 22
“ That now from me is known by Hunger’s name,
“ Where yet shall suffer sinners not a few,
- “ Had shown me now already through its frame 25
“ Successive moons, before that dream of ill,
“ That tore the future’s veil, upon me came.
- “ This man seemed lord and master; o’er the hill 28
“ Which hideth Lucca from the Pisan race
“ He hunted wolf and whelps, as he did will.

- " Gualandi and Sismondi 'fore his face 31
" He set, Lanfranchi too, and many a hound,
" Cunning and thin and eager in the chase.
- " Father and sons awhile maintained their ground; 34
" Then seemed they weary, and I saw in dread
" How the sharp teeth their panting sides did wound.
- " When I awoke ere yet the night had fled, 37
" I heard my sons, who shared my fate, in sleep
" Crying and praying me to give them bread.
- " If thou grieve not thy cruelty is deep, 40
" Thinking of all my heart did prophesy,
" And if not this, what then could make thee weep?
- " Now were they wakened, now that hour drew nigh 43
" When they were wont to bring our food before,
" And on each heart fear from his dream did lie.
- " And then I heard the key turn in the door 46
" Of the horrible tower; then I gazed steadily
" At my sons' faces, but I spake no more.
- " I did not weep; a stone I seemed to be; 49
" They wept; ' O Father,' little Anselm said,
" ' Thou starest so, what is it aileth thee? '
- " I answered not and yet no tear I shed, 52
" Nor spoke that day, nor all the following night,
" Till on the world another sun flamed red.

“ When from its beams a little ray of light 55
“ Pierced our sad dungeon, and their faces four
“ Reflected all too well my own sad plight,

“ Then both my hands for grief I bit and tore; 58
“ And they who thought I acted thus to slake
“ My hunger’s fire, arose from off the floor.

“ ‘ Father,’ they said, ‘ less pain for us thou’ldst make
“ If thou would’st eat of us; ’twas thou that clad 62
“ Us with this wretched flesh, ’tis thine to take.’

“ Then calm I grew, that they might grow less sad: 64
“ Dumb were we that day and the next beside.
“ Hard earth, would thou hadst opened as I bade!

“ But when the fourth day came, then Gaddo cried, 67
“ Casting himself down at the feet of me,
“ ‘ Father, canst thou not help me? ’ There he died.

“ And e’en as clear as I am seen by thee, 70
“ Between the fifth day and the sixth that came,
“ One after one, I saw them fall, all three.

“ Two days when they were dead I called each name, 73
“ Groping so blindly over them, mine own,
“ Then hunger had more power than grief could claim.”

With eyes distorted, having made this known, 76
On the wretched skull again his teeth made war,
That like a dog’s were strong upon the bone.

“ Ah! Pisa, Pisa, scandal known afar 79

“ Through that fair land where ‘ si ’ is heard to sound,

“ Since slow to punish thee thy neighbours are,

“ Would that Caprara and Gorgona found 82

“ Means to fence Arno at its mouth, whereby

“ Each soul that lives in thee were ’whelmed and
drowned!

“ What though Count Ugolino’s treachery 85

“ Toward thy castles, all abroad were famed,

“ His sons deserved not torment’s death to die.

“ Surely their age, thou later Thebes, proclaimed 88

“ Brigata and Uguccio innocent,

“ And those two others whom my song hath named.”

Thence to another people on we went, 91

Bound by the frost that roughest hold doth keep;

Not bending downwards, but all backward bent.

Their very tears allow them not to weep, 94

The grief that finds obstruction on their eyes,

To swell the anguish there within must creep.

For from the first tears must a knot arise, 97

And as it were with visor crystal-clear,

Fills up the space that ’neath the eyebrows lies,

And though as from a callus disappear 100

Sensations all, so vanished from my face

All power of feeling through the coldness drear,

I seemed to feel a wind that moved apace. 103

Wherefore: "O Master, say, who moveth this?

"Is not all heat extinguished in this place?"

And he to me: "Soon shalt thou be, I wis, 106

"Where for reply thou to thine eyes may'st trust.

"The cause that rains this wind they will not miss."

And one poor wretch from out the icy crust 109

Cried unto us: "O souls, so cruel found,

"That to the final station ye are thrust,

"Lift from my face the hard veils o'er it bound, 112

"That I may vent the grief that swells my heart

"A little, ere the tears again freeze round."

Wherefore I said: "Then tell me who thou art 115

"To get mine aid, then if I free thee not

"The deepmost of this ice shall be my part."

"Friar Alberigo I, whose garden plot 118

"Bore once such evil fruit," thereon he said;

"Here my reward, (dates for my figs,) is wrought."

"Ah!" cried I, "Art thou then already dead?" 121

And he: "How with my body now it goes

"In the world above, no knowledge here is shed.

"Such privilege this Ptolomea knows 124

"That many times the soul will hither stray,

"Ere Atropos the last impulse bestows.

- " And that more willingly thou take away 127
" From off my countenance, these tears of glass,
" Know that as soon as any soul betray
- " As I, her body from her hold, alas! 130
" A demon takes; thenceforth he governs there,
" Until the allotted time away shall pass.
- " She to this cistern rushing down must fare; 133
" Perchance the body of this other shade
" That winters at my back, still breathes the air.
- " Know it thou must, if here but now thou'st strayed,
" Ser Branca d'Oria 'tis, and many a year 137
" Has passed since he close here was prisoner made."
- " That thou deceivest me," I said, " is clear, 139
" For Branca d'Oria, look thou, has not died,
" But eats and drinks and sleeps, doth clothing wear."
- " To the Malebranche's ditch above," he cried, 142
" Which the tenacious boiling pitch doth claim,
" Not yet perforce had Michel Zanche hied,
- " Ere this man left within his mortal frame 145
" A devil in his stead, and equally
" Did the kinsman traitor who had shared the shame.
- " But now reach out thy hand hither to me, 148
" Open mine eyes." I freed them not at all.
And thus to do him wrong was courtesy.

CANTO XXXIII

227

Ah, Genoese, deaf unto every call 151
Of moral law, who for all vileness thirst,
Why from the world are ye not cast withal?

For with Romagna's spirit most accurst, 154
I found one citizen, whose soul to-day
For his vile deeds Cocytus holds immersed,

While yet on earth alive he seems to stay. 157

CANTO XXXIV

THE Judecca, or Last Circlet of Cocytus, takes its name from Judas Iscariot, and contains the souls of those "who betrayed their masters and benefactors." The Arch Traitor Satan, "Emperor of the Realm of Sorrow," stands fixed in the Centre of it; and he too is punished by his own Sin. All the streams of Guilt keep flowing back to him, as their source; and from beneath his three Faces (Shadows of his consciousness) issue forth the mighty wings with which he struggles, as it were, to raise himself; and sends out winds that freeze him only the more firmly in his ever-swelling Marsh. Dante has to take a full view of him too; and then is carried through the Centre by his Mystic Guide—"grappling on the hair of Satan," not without significance; and set down on "the other face of the Judecca." And now the bitter journey of our Pilgrim is over; and a tone of gladness goes through the remaining verses. Hell is now behind him, and the Stars of Heaven above: he has got beyond the "Everlasting No," and is "sore travailed," and the "way is long and difficult," but it leads from Darkness to the "bright world." After some brief inquiries, "without caring for any repose," by aid of the heaven-sent Wisdom he "plucks himself from the Abyss;" and follows climbing, till they see the Stars in the opposite hemisphere.

"Behold, the banners of the King of Hell
"Move upon us, therefore," my Master said,
"Look now before thee, if thou'dst see him well."

As shows a mill afar by breezes sped,
When o'er one hemisphere draws on the night,
Or when a gathering mist abroad is spread,

E'en such a vision seemed to meet my sight, 7
And for the wind behind my guide I drew,
For want of other shelter for my plight.

I was, (with fear I frame my verse thereto), 10
Already where the souls all covered show,
And like to straw in glass they all shone through.

Some lay outstretched, and some stood upright, lo! 13
This on its head, that on its feet, and there
Another face to feet, bent like a bow.

When we had journeyed thence, as far as where 16
It pleased my master to show unto me
The creature that had once semblance so fair,

Moving aside before me then said he, 19
Staying me, "Lo! now Dis, and lo! that place,
"Where must thou arm thyself with valiancy."

How hoarse and frozen I became, for grace 22
Ask me not reader, for howe'er I strive
To write, all speech all unavailing stays.

I did not die, nor yet remained alive. 25
Think, if thou canst, what I became therefore,
Whom fear did then of life and death deprive.

He stood, the dolorous kingdom's emperor, 28
Out of the ice to midmost of his breast,
And I am like unto a giant more

Than are the giants to his arms; well guessed 31
It now can be how great a whole is there,
Since to this part must correspond the rest.

If, as he now is foul, he once was fair, 34
And 'gainst his Maker lifted brows of pride,
Well may proceed from him all grief and care.

When on his head three faces I espied, 37
How great a marvel seemed it then to me!
The one in front in scarlet hue was dyed;

The other two, to this one neighbourly, 40
Rose o'er the middle of each shoulder, ending
Where at his crest united were the three.

Yellow and white seemed in the right one blending, 43
The left to look on was as men who bide
In lands far off, where Nile begins descending.

From under each two wings came out, as wide 46
As it befits from such a bird to spring;
Sails of the sea so broad I ne'er espied.

No feathers had they, but their fashioning 49
Resembled bats' wings, and he flapped them sore,
So that from him three winds went blustering.

Thereby Cocytus all was frozen o'er; 52
His six eyes wept, and down three chins beneath,
His tears and bloody foam streaming did pour.

In every mouth a sinner with his teeth 55
He champed, like to a bit; thus three there were
He kept in torment worse than any death.

On him in front the teeth were plied to tear 58
Far more than e'en to bite; oft-times the skin
Was stripped from off his back, leaving it bare.

"That soul above, who greater pain doth win, 61
"Judas Iscariot is," my Master said;
"His legs he plies without, his head within.

"And of the twain, each hanging down his head, 64
"'Tis Brutus hangeth from the muzzle dark,
"See how he writhes, but ne'er a sound hath made.

"Cassius the other, large of limb and stark. 67
"Now must we hence, for night ascends again,
"All have we seen here to the final mark."

As he desired, I clasped his neck, and when 70
He'd chosen time and place, e'en as he must,
And the great wings most wide were opened, then

Close to the shaggy sides himself he thrust, 73
From tuft to tuft descended clingingly,
Between the tangled hair and frozen crust.

When we had reached the place whereat the thigh 76
Revolves, just where the haunch begins to swell,
My guide, with labour and anxiety,

Turned now his head where erst his footprints fell, 79
And e'en as one who climbs, grappled the hair,
Until I thought we should return to Hell.

" Make fast thy hold, for e'en by such a stair," 82
My guide said, panting like a man forespent,
" Must we depart from all this evil air."

Thereafter through a hollowed rock he went, 85
And placed me there to sit upon its brim,
Then toward me stretched his wary step intent.

I raised mine eyes, thinking to look on him, 88
Lucifer, as but now he seemed to me,
But saw him holding upward each great limb.

Let the gross people think, who cannot see 91
What was that point o'er which I now had passed,
If then I were not in perplexity.

" Rise up," my Master said, " for far thou hast 94
" To journey, long and difficult the road,
" And to mid tierce the Sun returneth fast."

No palace hall was it where we abode, 97
But Nature's dungeon rather seemèd this,
With evil floor and little light that showed.

" Before I snatch myself from the abyss," 100
When I stood straight I said, " Master mine own,
" Speak, and so show me where mine error is.

" Where is the ice? and how thus upside down 103

" Is he now fixed? How in a space so small

" From eve to morning can the sun have flown? "

And he: "Thou deemest still thy feet do fall 106

" Beyond the centre, where I caught the hair

" Of that foul worm, piercing the great world's wall.

" So long as I descended wert thou there; 109

" When I turned round, thou passed the point whereto

" All that hath weight is drawn from everywhere.

" Now to the hemisphere art thou come through, 112

" Opposed to that which o'er the wide waste sand

" Extends, and 'neath whose summit death He knew,

" Sinless in birth and life; now dost thou stand 115

" Upon a little sphere, of which is made

" The other face of the Guidecca's land.

" Morn is it here when there comes evening's shade; 118

" And he, whose hair our ladder wrought, is here

" Still fixed, e'en as a while ago he stayed.

" From this side fell he down from Heav'n sheer; 121

" The land which erst stood forth then with the sea

" Made for itself a veil, through very fear,

" And to our hemisphere it came; may be 124

" To fly from him, that which appears this side,

" Leaving this empty space, rushed upwardly."

Down from Beelzebub removed as wide 127
As doth his tomb reach out, a space extendeth
Where the sound only, not the sight, doth guide,

Of a small streamlet that herein descendeth, 130
Through hollowed rock, where gnawing it hath flowed;
Winding the course and slowly upward tendeth.

My guide and I entered that hidden road, 133
At whose far end the bright world's glory lies,
And with no care for rest, upward we strode,

He first, I second, at such depth mine eyes 136
Saw all the lovely things of heaven afar,
Through a round opening, whence we did uprise

To see again the gleam of many a star. 139

NOTES

DANTE'S HELL

THE arrangement of the sins in Dante's Hell has been the subject of protracted and sometimes heated controversy. The reader who wishes to know something of the different views that have been taken, and the arguments brought in their support may consult Dr. Witte's essay on "The Ethical Systems of the Inferno and the Purgatory," together with the Appendix in the English translation.¹ The present note simply aims at stating the view which seems to the writer the most satisfactory.

All three portions of the poem are built upon the number scheme of 3, 7, 9, 10. The primary division into 3 being raised by sub-division to 7, then by two somewhat unlike additions to 9, and lastly, by a member of a markedly different kind, to 10. This scheme is carried out in all the three *Cantiche*, though it is not so clearly and symmetrically developed in the *Inferno* as in the other two.

In Dante's Hell the primary division of reprehensible actions into three classes is based upon Aristotle; but some ambiguity is introduced by the adoption in the first instance of a nomenclature for a portion of the subject matter derived from Cicero. The Aristotelian division is into—

- I. Incontinence, which includes all wrong action due to the inadequate control of natural appetites or desires.
- II. Brutishness, or Bestiality, which is characteristic of morbid states in which what is naturally repulsive becomes attractive; and
- III. Malice or Vice, which consists of those evil actions which involve the abuse of the specifically human attribute of reason.

Aristotle distinctly asserts that brutishness is a "different kind of thing" from vice or malice; but owing to a very natural misunderstanding of the Greek text, the Latin translators, followed by the Schoolmen, understood him to say that brutishness was "another kind of malice;" so that to them malice became a generic term including brutish malice and malice proper. Hence, when Cicero declares that all injurious conduct acts either by violence or by fraud, it was easy to identify his "injuriousness" with Aristotle's supposed generic "malice," his violence with Aristotle's brutish "malice" and his fraud with Aristotle's "malice" proper or specific "malice." The primary division then yields—

- I. Incontinence.
- II. Violence or Brutishness.
- III. Fraud or Malice.

By sub-division of the first of these categories into 4, and the last into 2, we obtain the total of 7. Add to these unbelief (heathen and unbaptized) and misbelief (heretics) as standing outside the Aristotelian classification, but demanding a place in Hell as conceived by the medieval catholic, and we have the nine circles of Hell. Add again the circle outside the river of Acheron, where are the Trimmers, rejected alike by Heaven and Hell, and we then have a tenfold division (9 + 1) corresponding to those of Purgatory and Paradise. There is, however, a further sub-division peculiar to the *Inferno*; for the three last circles, 7,

¹ *Essays on Dante*, by Dr. Karl Witte, selected, translated and edited with introduction, notes and appendices by C. Mabel Lawrence, B.A., and Philip H. Wicksteed, M.A. Duckworth, 1898.

8, 9, are sub-divided respectively into 3, 10, and 4 divisions, so that the locally distinct abiding-places of unblest souls mount in all to twenty-four. These divisions are set forth in the appended table:

Trimmers	.	0	.	.	.	.	.	.	1
	Heathen	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	2
I. Incontinence	i. carnality	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	3
	ii. gluttony	3	.	.	.	.	.	.	4
	iii. avarice	4	.	.	.	.	.	.	5
	iv. anger	5	.	.	.	.	.	.	6
	Heretics	6	.	.	.	.	.	.	7
II. Violence or Brutishness	v. violent	7	i. against neighbour	.	.	.	.	.	8
			ii. " self	.	.	.	.	.	9
			iii. " God	.	.	.	.	.	10
	vi. simple	8	i. seducers and panders	.	.	.	.	.	11
			ii. flatterers	.	.	.	.	.	12
			iii. simonists	.	.	.	.	.	13
			iv. diviners	.	.	.	.	.	14
			v. peculators	.	.	.	.	.	15
			vi. hypocrites	.	.	.	.	.	16
			vii. thieves	.	.	.	.	.	17
			viii. evil counsellors	.	.	.	.	.	18
			ix. sowers of dissension	.	.	.	.	.	19
			x. forgers	.	.	.	.	.	20
III. Fraud or malice	vii. treacherous	9	i. against kin	.	.	.	.	.	21
			ii. " country	.	.	.	.	.	22
			iii. " hospitality	.	.	.	.	.	23
			iv. " lords and benefactors	.	.	.	.	.	24

P. H. W.

THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE "INFERNO"

THE chronology of the Divine Comedy has been discussed still more elaborately than the topography and the division of sins; and here again all that this note attempts is to set forth in plain terms the view which approves itself to the writer. References are given to the passages which support the statements made; but there is no attempt to defend the interpretation adopted against other views.

The year of the Vision is 1300; *Inf.* i. 1; xxi. 112-114; *Purg.* ii. 98, 99; *Parad.* ix. 40. The Sun is exactly in the equinoctial point at Spring, the change of his position during the action of the poem being ignored; *Inf.* i. 38-40; *Parad.* x. 7-33; and less precisely *Parad.* i. 37-44. The night on which Dante loses himself in the forest is the night preceding the anniversary of the death of Christ; *Inf.* xxi. 112-114. At some period during that night the moon is at the full; *Inf.* xx. 127; and (as will presently appear) a comparison of *Inf.* xx. 124-126 with xxi. 112-114, together with a reference to *Purg.* ix. 1-9, indicates that the precise moment of full moon coincided with the sunrise at the end of the night in question. We have then the following data: the Sun is in the equinox, the moon is at the full; and it is the night preceding the anniversary of the crucifixion. There is no day in the year 1300 which meets all these conditions. We are therefore in the presence of an ideal date, combining all the phenomena which we are accustomed to associate with Easter, but not corresponding to any actual day in the calendar. All discussions as to whether we are to call the day that Dante spent in the attempt to climb the mountain the 25th March or the 8th April (both of which, in the year 1300, were Fridays), are therefore otiose.

The Sun is rising, on Friday morning, when Dante begins his attempt to scale

the mountain, *Inf.* i, 37-40; it is Friday evening when he starts with Virgil on his journey, ii, 1-3; all the stars which were mounting as the poets entered the gate of Hell, are descending as they pass from the 4th to the 5th circle, vii, 98, 99; that is to say, it is midnight between Friday and Saturday. As they descend from the 6th to the 7th circle the constellation of Pisces (which at the spring equinox immediately precedes the Sun) is on the horizon, xl, 113; that is to say, it is somewhere between 4 and 6 a.m. on the Saturday morning. They are on the centre of the bridge over the 4th bolgia of the 8th circle as the moon sets (Jerusalem time), xx, 124-126. Now according to the rule given by Brunetto Latini, we are to allow fifty-two minutes' retardation for the moon in every twenty-four hours; that is to say, if the moon sets at sunrise one day, she will set fifty-two minutes after sunrise the next. If then (see above) we suppose the moon to have been full at the moment of sunrise on Friday morning, we shall have six o'clock on Friday morning and 6.52 on Saturday morning for moonset. This will give us eight minutes to seven as the moment at which the two poets stood on the middle of the bridge over the 4th bolgia. The next eight minutes are crowded; so crowded, indeed, as to constitute a serious difficulty in the system of interpretation here adopted; for the poets are already in conference with the demons on the inner side of bolgia 5 by seven o'clock, xxi, 112-114 (compared with *Conv.* iv, 23, 103-107). In mitigation of the difficulty, however, it may be noted that the 5th bolgia, like some at least of the others, appears to be very narrow, xxii, 145-150. The moon is under their feet as they stand over the middle of the 9th bolgia, xxix, 10, which, allowing for the further retardation of the moon, will give the time as a little past one o'clock on Saturday afternoon. They have come close to Satan at nightfall, six o'clock on Saturday evening, xxxiv, 68, 69; and they spend an hour and a half first in clambering down Satan's sides, to the dead centre of the universe, then turning round and clambering up again towards the antipodes of Jerusalem. It is therefore 7.30 *in the morning* in the hemisphere under which they now are (7.30 in the evening in the hemisphere which they have left), when they begin their ascent of the tunnel that leads from the central regions to the foot of Mount Purgatory, xxxiv, 96. This ascent occupies them till nearly dawn of the next day. The period of this ascent therefore corresponds to the greater part of the night between Saturday and Sunday and of the day of Easter Sunday by Jerusalem time. By Purgatory time it is day and night, not night and day. It is simplest to regard the period as Easter Sunday and Sunday night; but some prefer to regard it as Saturday (over again) and Saturday night. It depends on whether we regard the Sunday, or other day, as beginning with sunrise at Purgatory and going all round the world with the sun till he rises in Purgatory again; or as running in like manner from sunrise to sunrise at Jerusalem, rather than Purgatory. In the former case it will be found that, after spending three days and three nights on the Mount of Purgatory and six hours in the Earthly Paradise, Dante rises to Heaven at Mid-day on Thursday and goes round the world with Thursday till he is about over Italy as the sun sets in Jerusalem, *Parad.* xxvii, 79-87 (see note on this passage) on Thursday evening. If the other view be taken we shall say that it is noon-day on Wednesday (not Thursday) when Dante rises to Heaven, and that he goes round with Wednesday till he is over the meridian of Jerusalem, when the day changes to Thursday.

In any case the action of the Divine Comedy lasts just a week, and ends on the Thursday evening.

P. H. W.

CANTO I

1. The Vision takes place at Eastertide of the year 1300, that is to say, when Dante was thirty-five years old. Cf. *Psalms* xc. 10: "The days of our years are threescore years and ten." See also *Convito* iv. 23: "Where the top of this arch [of life] may be, it is difficult to know. . . . I believe that in the perfectly natural man, it is at the thirty-fifth year.

2-3. Cf. *Convito* iv. 24: ". . . the adolescent who enters into the Wood of Error of this life would not know how to keep to the good path if it were not pointed out to him by his elders." *Politically*: the "wood" stands for the troubled state of Italy in Dante's time.

13. The "holy Hill" of the Bible; Bunyan's "Delectable Mountains." See below, *vv.* 77, 78.

17. Dante speaks elsewhere (*Conv.* iv. 12) of the "spiritual Sun, which is God."

32. Worldly Pleasure; *politically*: Florence.

38-40. According to tradition, the sun was in Aries at the time of the Creation.

45. Ambition; *politically*: the Royal House of France.

49. Avarice; *politically*: the Papal See. The three beasts are obviously taken from *Jeremiah* v. 6.

63. Virgil, who stands for Worldly Wisdom, and is Dante's guide through Hell and Purgatory (see Gardner, pp. 87, 88).

69, 70. Virgil was born at Andes, near Mantua, in the year 70 B.C. When Caesar was murdered (B.C. 44), Virgil had not yet written his great poem, so that he did not enjoy Caesar's patronage.

73-75. In the *Aeneid*.

100. An allusion to the Papal alliances.

101-105. The "greyhound" (*veltro*) is usually explained as Can Grande della Scala (1290-1329), whose "nation" (or, perhaps better, "birthplace") was Verona, between Feltre in Venetia and Montefeltro in Romagna, and who became a great Ghibelline leader. Cf. *Par.* xvii. 76-93. This is, on the whole, the most satisfactory interpretation, though the claims of several other personages (notably Uguccione della Faggiuola and Pope Benedict XI.) have been advanced. In any case it is as well to bear in mind that Dante rested his hopes of Italy's deliverance on various persons in the course of his life.

106. "Lowly" (*umile*), either "low-lying" or "humble." If the latter be correct, the epithet is, of course, applied sarcastically.

107, 8. All these personages occur in the *Aeneid*.

111. See *Wisdom of Solomon*, ii. 24: "nevertheless through envy of the devil came death into the world."

118. The souls in Purgatory.

121-123. Beatrice, or Heavenly Wisdom, will guide Dante through Paradise. No student of Dante should omit to read the *Vita Nuova*, in which the poet tells the story of his youthful love (see also Gardner, pp. 8, 9 and 87, 88).

124-126. Virgil's position is among the virtuous pagans in Limbo (see below, *Canto* iv. 31, *sqq.*).

134. The gate of Purgatory (*Purg.* x. 76, *sqq.*). The Angel at this gate has charge of the two keys of St. Peter (*l.c.* 117).

CANTO II

13-15. Virgil relates the descent of Aeneas (Sylvius' father) to Hell in a passage that served Dante as a model in many respects (*Aen.* vi. 236-900).

17-21. Aeneas regarded as the ancestor of the founder (*il chi*) of Rome, which became the seat of the Empire (*il quale*).

22-24. The intimate relations between the Empire and Papacy, which, according to Dante's view (see *De Mon., passim*), supplemented each other, are well brought out in these lines and in v. 27.

25-27. Aeneas learns from Anchises the greatness of the stock that is to spring from him (*cf. Aen.* vi. 757, *sqq.*).

28-30. The reference is obviously not to 2 *Cor.* xii. 2 but to the medieval Vision of St. Paul in which is described the saint's descent to Hell. St. Paul is called "chosen vessel" in *Acts* ix. 15.

52. The souls in Limbo that "without hope live in desire" (Canto iv.).

76-78. Divine Wisdom (Beatrice) raises mankind higher than aught else on earth. The sphere of the moon is the one nearest to the earth, and has, therefore, the smallest circumference.

97, 98. Lucia: Illuminating Grace. She is probably identical with the Syracusan saint (3rd century) who became the special patroness of those afflicted with weak sight. This would explain her symbolical position, and the expression "thy servant" (*il tuo fedele*): for Dante suffered with his eyes (*cf. Vita Nuova*, § 40, 27-34; *Conv.* iii. 9: 147-157). For Lucy, see further, *Purg.* ix. 55, and *Par.* xxxii. 137, *sq.*

100. Illuminating Grace affects only gentle souls.

102. Rachel stands for the Contemplative Life (*cf. Purg.* xxvii. 104). For Beatrice and Rachel see *Par.* xxxii. 9.

CANTO III

5, 6. Power, Wisdom, and Love—the Holy Trinity.

7. The "eternal things" are first matter, the angels and the heavens (see *Par.* vii. 130, *sqq.*).

38, 39. There is no mention of these angels in the Bible. Dante evidently followed a popular tradition, traces of which may be found in the medieval Voyage of St. Brandan.

42. The other sinners were at least able to make up their mind.

52-54. The shifting flag is symbolical of the wavering spirit of these souls.

59, 60. . . . Probably Celestine V., who was elected Pope in 1294, at the age of eighty, and resigned five months later in favour of Boniface VIII.: this latter circumstance is in itself sufficient to account for Dante's wrath. Objections may be raised against this interpretation; but the other names suggested (such as Esau, or Vieri de' Cerchi, chief of the Florentine Whites) are even less satisfactory.

CANTO IV

52-61. Dante follows the legend, probably based on 1 *Peter* iii. 19, and handed down in the *Evang. Nicod.*, according to which Christ descended to Hell in the year 33 (that is to say, fifty-two years after Virgil's death) and liberated certain souls.

106-110. The symbolism here is not very obvious. Perhaps the castle stands for Philosophy; the seven walls: the liberal virtues (*i.e.*, Prudence, Justice, Fortitude and Temperance, Wisdom, Knowledge and Understanding); the stream: Eloquence; the seven gates: the liberal arts (Grammar, Logic, Rhetoric, Music, Arithmetic, Geometry, and Astronomy).

121-126. Electra: the daughter of Atlas and mother of Dardanus, the founder of Troy (*cf. Aen.* viii. 134, *sqq.*, and *De Mon.* ii. 3: 74, 75); Hector and Aeneas: the Trojan heroes; Penthesilea, Queen of the Amazons, assisted the Trojans after Hector's death; Camilla died while opposing the Trojans in Italy (*cf. Inf.* i. 107); Latinus and Lavinia: the father-in-law and wife of Aeneas; Caesar is introduced here as a descendant of Aeneas (the mythical founder of the Roman Empire).

127, 128. Lucius Junius Brutus brought about the overthrow of Tarquinius Superbus, whose son had dishonoured Collatine's wife Lucretia (B.C. 510); Julia: the daughter of Julius Caesar and wife of Pompey; Martia: the wife of Cato of Utica (*cf. Purg.* i. 79, *sqq.*); Cornelia: daughter of Publius Cornelius Scipio Africanus Major, and wife of Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus, whom she bore two sons, Tiberius and Caius, the famous tribunes (*cf. Par.* xv. 129).

129. The famous Saladin (1137-1193) who was known throughout Europe during the Middle Ages for his munificence and who became the type of the Eastern potentate. He opposed the Crusaders and was defeated by Richard Cœur de Lion.

131. Aristotle.

134. Plato's influence in the Middle Ages was not nearly so great as that of Aristotle.

136-138. Early Greek philosophers (7th-4th centuries B.C.).

139-144. Dioscorides (author of a medical work, treating of the qualities of plants), Hippocrates and Galen were Greek physicians; Orpheus and Linus: mythical Greek singers and poets; Tullius is, of course, Cicero and Seneca, the writer whose ethical works were much read in the Middle Ages; Ptolemy's astronomical system was generally accepted throughout the Middle Ages and adopted by Dante; Avicenna (980-1037) and Averrhoes (12th century): Arabian physicians and philosophers, both of whom wrote commentaries on Aristotle (the former one on Galen, too). Averrhoes' work was translated into Latin *ca.* 1250, and enjoyed a great vogue in Europe, where it was largely instrumental in bringing about the revival of Aristotle's philosophy.

CANTO V

52-60. According to Orosius, Semiramis succeeded her husband Ninus as ruler of Assyria. She was known for her licentious character. Dante appears to have confused the ancient kingdom of Assyria or Babylonia in Asia with the Babylon in Egypt, for only the latter was ruled by the Sultan. Or perhaps he followed a tradition according to which Ninus conquered Egypt.

61, 62. Dido, Queen of Carthage, fell in love with Aeneas, after the death of her husband Sichaeus, to whose memory she had sworn fidelity. When Aeneas left her to go to Italy, she slew herself on a funeral pyre (*Aen.* iv.).

63. Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt, the mistress of Caesar and Antony.

64, 65, and 67. Helen, the wife of Menelaus, King of Sparta, was carried off by Paris of Troy, and was thus the cause of the Trojan war.

65, 66. According to mediæval legend, Achilles was slain by Paris in a Trojan temple, whither he had gone with the intention of marrying Paris' sister Polyxena who had been promised him as a reward if he would join the Trojans.

67. Tristram of Lyonesse, one of King Arthur's knights, who loved Yseult, the wife of his uncle, King Mark of Cornwall, and was killed by the outraged husband.

73-142. Francesca, daughter of Guido Vecchio da Polenta (and aunt of the Guido Novello at whose court in Ravenna Dante found his last refuge), was, for political reasons married to Gianciotto, the deformed son of Malatesta da Verucchio, Lord of Rimini (*ca.* 1275). About ten years later Gianciotto, having surprised his wife with his younger brother Paolo, stabbed the guilty pair. These are the bald historical facts, to which legend early began to add romantic details, tampering not only with the dates of the events and the ages of the persons concerned, but with the actual facts. Thus, it is quite possible that Paolo took part in the preliminary negotiations connected with his brother's marriage; but this circumstance was utilised in such a way as to make it appear as though Francesca actually went through the ceremony of marriage with the handsome Paolo, and did not discover the trick till it was too late.

97-99. Ravenna, situated close by the shore of the Adriatic Sea, at the mouth of the Po.

107. The region of Hell reserved for those who had slain a relative (see below, Canto xxxii.).

121-123. The quotation is from Boethius.

127-137. The passage in the Old French version of the Lancelot Romance which alone contains all the details given by Dante, here and in *Par.* xv. 13-15, is now known, thanks to Mr. Paget Toynbee. That Dante was acquainted with the Old French poems dealing with the *matière de Bretagne* is proved by *De Vulg. El.* l. 10: 12-20.

137. *Galeotto* synonymous with "pander": for, in the Old French poem, Gallehault renders Lancelot and Guinivere the same service that Pandarus rendered Troilus and Cressida, according to the Trojan legend.

CANTO VI

38. This person, nicknamed Ciaccio ("Hog"), was noted for his gluttony; his redeeming feature appears to have been a ready wit. He is said to have died in 1286 (see *v.* 42).

60. It is not till later in his journey (see below, Canto x. 100, *sqq.*) that Dante learns to what extent the souls in Hell are able to foresee future events.

64-69. These verses contain, in brief, the political history of Florence from 1300-1302 (see Gardner, pp. 18-23). The Black and White Guefs, headed by Corso Donati and Vieri de' Cerchi, respectively, came to blows on May 11, 1300. In May 1301, the Whites ("the woodmen," *parte selveggia*, that is, either "party of the woods:" because the Cerchi came from the wooded district of Val di Sieve, in the Mugello; or "wild" party: as opposed to the more aristocratic faction of the Donati) expelled the Blacks. But, with the covert aid of Boniface VIII. (verse 69), the Blacks soon gained the upper hand, and drove their rivals from the city. The last important decrees of exile against the Whites were signed in the latter half of 1302; and their decisive defeat took place in the first quarter of 1303; both of which dates fall within the third year (see verse 68) from the time at which Ciaccio is speaking (*cf. Purg.* xx. 70-78).

70. Dante did not live to see his party triumph.

73. Probably Dante himself, and his friend Guido Cavalcanti (for whom see *Inf.* x. 60, *note*).

85-87. For Farinata, see below, Canto x.; for Tegghiaio and Rusticucci: Canto xvi.; and for Mosca: Canto xxviii. Arrigo is not mentioned again; but, according to the old commentators, he was one of Mosca's fellow-conspirators, and is therefore presumably punished in the same circle.

94-99. The Last Judgment (see *Matthew* xxv. 31, *sqq.*). The "power" is, of course, Christ, the enemy of the wicked.

106-111. These lines are clear when taken in conjunction with verse 98 and with *Par.* xiv. 45 (see *note*). "Thy science" is the doctrine of Aristotle (as incorporated in Thomas Aquinas).

115. It seems probable that Dante, following the general medieval tradition (traces of which appear even in classical times) did not distinguish clearly between Pluto, the God of the lower regions, and Plutus, the God of riches.

CANTO VII

1. Virgil, "who knew all things," understood these words; but as for us, it seems best to admit that we do not even know to which language they belong, though various attempts have been made to connect them with Hebrew, Greek, and French.

11, 12. See *Rev.* xii. 7-9. "Adultery" in the Biblical sense (*Ezek.* xxiii. 37, etc.).

22. The whirlpool of Charybdis (in the straits of Messina) which was specially dangerous by reason of its proximity to the rock Scylla, is frequently alluded to in classical literature.

38, 39 and 46-48. The avarice of the clergy was held in special aversion by Dante (*cf. Inf.* i. 49, *note*, and xix. 112-114).

71. At the time of the composition of the *Convito* (iv. 11) Dante himself did not yet connect Fortune in any way with the Deity.

73-78. Even as the Intelligences were created by God to regulate the Heavens (*cf. Par.* xxviii.), so a power was ordained by Him to guide the destinies of man on earth; and this power is Fortune.

91-93. These lines may mean that Fortune should not be blamed seeing that, on the one hand, she acts under God's direction (see above, verse 71, *note*), while, on the other, man has the power of free-will and a conscience, altogether beyond the pale of her influence (see below, Canto xv. 92-96). They may also be taken together with verse 90, in which case they would imply that the man who has experienced the blows of Fortune should rejoice: for the turn of her wheel may soon bring him happiness.

96. "First creations," the Angels, created together with the heavens (*cf. Purg.* xi. 3, and xxxi. 77).

98, 99. At the beginning of Canto ii. the poet describes the evening of the first day of the journey; it is now past midnight.

CANTO VIII

1. "Continuing." No importance need be attached to the tradition based on this word, according to which the first seven cantos were written by Dante before his exile, and the composition of the work was resumed after a considerable interval.

30. The others being spirits (*cf. v.* 27).

32. Filippo Argenti's disagreeable character is not sufficient to account for Dante's special hatred. There is evidence to show that members of the Adimari family, to which Filippo belonged, were hostile to the poet himself. In *Par.* xvi. 115-120 Cacciaguida's reference to them is anything but flattering.

69. So far, only sins of *incontinenza* have been punished. Within the City of Dis (or Pluto) are punished the graver sins of *malizia* and *bestialitade* (*cf. Inf.* xi. 70, *sqq.*).

82, 83. The angels that fell with Satan (*cf. Rev. xii. 9*).

97. "Seven" is not to be taken literally: *cf. Psalms cxxix. 164; Proverbs xxiv. 16, etc.*

124-127. These same demons had opposed Christ at the gate of Hell (*cf. Inf. iii. 1, sqq.*), when he descended to Limbo (*cf. Inf. iv. 32, sqq.*).

128. The angel whose coming is described in the next canto, *vv. 64, sqq.*

CANTO IX

1-3. Virgil forces himself to appear composed, so as not to alarm Dante still more.

16-18. Dante wishes to find out whether Virgil is really able to aid him in the present difficulty. There is much ingenuity in the question, which is framed in such a way as not to wound Virgil's susceptibilities.

22-27. Before the Battle of Pharsalia, Sextus Pompeius bids the sorceress Erichtho summon the spirit of one of his dead soldiers, so as to learn the issue of his campaign against Caesar. The passage in which this episode is related by Lucan (*Pharsalia vi. 508-830*) probably accounts for the appearance of Erichtho here as a sorceress. But the tradition referring to the spirit in Giudecca (for which region see below, canto xxxiv.) has not come down to us. Dante probably found it in one of the numerous medieval legends relating to Virgil.

44. "Queen." Proserpine was carried off by Pluto and became queen of the lower world.

45-48. The Furies.

53. The head of the Gorgon Medusa was so terrible as to turn any one that beheld it into stone.

54. Theseus, King of Athens, made an unsuccessful attempt to carry off Proserpine from the lower regions. According to the more common form of the legend, he is punished by being forced to remain in Hell to all eternity; but Dante follows the other version, which tells how he was eventually rescued by Hercules.

61-63. A bad conscience (the Furies) and stern obduracy which turns the heart to stone (Medusa) are impediments that obstruct the path of every sinner intent on salvation. Reason (Virgil) may do much to obviate these evil influences; but Divine aid (the angel, *vv. 64, sqq.*) is necessary to dissipate them altogether.

98, 99. The last of Hercules' twelve labours was to bring Cerberus to the upper world; in the course of which operation the brute sustained the injuries here alluded to.

112-115. Aleschans, near Arles, was noted for the tombs of Christians slain in battle against the infidels. The soldiers of Charlemagne were said to have been buried there after the rout of Roncesvalles; and the battle of Aleschans (see the O. Fr. *chanson de geste* of that name), in which William of Orange was defeated by the Saracens, must have added considerably to the number of the tombs.—Pola, a seaport near the southern extremity of the Istrian peninsula, on the Gulf of Quarnero, is still famous for its antiquities, though rather for a Roman amphitheatre than for the tombs mentioned by Dante.

CANTO X

10-12. *Cf. Inf. vi. 94, sqq.*

15. The essential doctrine of Epicurus' philosophy is that the highest happiness is of a negative nature, consisting in absence of pain. This is how Dante himself expounds the philosophy in *Conv. iv. 6: 100-110*. The present passage

contains rather a corollary of Epicurus' teaching. Epicurus' *summum bonum* is conceivable on earth, whereas the Catholic Church teaches that life on earth is but "a running unto death," and that true happiness is to be found only in the life beyond.—Note that heresy, as defined in this verse, is elsewhere designated by Dante as the worst form of bestiality (*Conv.* ii. 9: 55-58). This accounts for the position of the heretics in the City of Dis (*cf.* *Inf.* xi. 83).

18. Perhaps the wish to see some more of his fellow-citizens.

21. See *Inf.* iii. 76, *sqq.*

22. The Uberti family were leaders of the Ghibelline faction in Florence (see *Par.* xvi. 109, 110, *note*). Farinata, the present speaker, was born at the beginning of the thirteenth century and became head of his house in 1239.

46-51. The Guefts were overthrown by the Ghibellines in 1248 and in 1260; but each time they managed to regain the upper hand (in 1251 and 1266, respectively). The Uberti were held in special aversion, for even after a general pacification between the two factions had taken place, in 1280, they were among the families who were forbidden to return.

52. We know nothing of Cavalcante Cavalcanti save what may be gathered from this passage.

60. Guido Cavalcanti (born between 1250 and 1259) was the son of Cavalcante and the son-in-law of Farinata, whose daughter he married at a time when marriages between Guefts and Ghibellines were frequently resorted to as a means of reconciling the two factions. He and Dante are the chief representatives of the Florentine school of lyrical poetry—that of the *dolce stil nuovo* (see *Purg.* xxiv. 49-63), which superseded the Bolognese school of Guido Guinicelli (see *Purg.* xi. 97, 98). The friendship of the two poets began with the publication of Dante's first sonnet (*A ciascun' alma presa e gentil core*), to which Guido, among others, replied (1283). The *Vita Nuova* is dedicated to Guido and contains several references to him as the author's best friend. In politics Guido was a White Gueft, and a violent opponent of Corso Donati. Things came to such a pass during Dante's Priorate that it was decided to banish the heads of the two factions. The Whites were sent to Sarzana in the Lunigiana, the climate of which place proved fatal to Guido, who died at the end of August 1300; so that he was still among the living at the date of the vision (see below *vv.* 68, 69, and 111).

63. Why Guido should disdain Virgil has been a sore puzzle to the commentators. Some hold that Guido, as a student of philosophy, despised a mere poet; others, that, as an ardent Gueft, he could not admire Virgil—the representative of the Imperial Roman idea; others, quoting *Vita Nuova*, xxxi. 21-24, maintain that he advocated vulgar poetry as opposed to Latin; others, finally, lay stress on his Epicurean principles, as contrasted with Virgil, who represents Reason illuminated by Divine Grace (Beatrice having sent him to Dante's aid).

79-81. Dante was banished in 1302, and the efforts of Pope Benedict XI. to bring about the return of the exiles were finally frustrated in June of the year 1304 (see Gardner, p. 27). As Dante is so precise, we must take it that this was less (though it could not have been very much less) than fifty months (Proserpina=Luna) from the time at which Farinata is speaking.

83, 84. See above, *note* to *vv.* 46-51.

85-87. At the battle of Montaperti (a village near Siena, situated on a hill close to the Arbia), which was fought on September 4th, 1260, the Siennese and exiled Ghibellines utterly routed the Florentine Guefts. Verse 87 may be taken to mean either that this battle caused the Guefts to pray for the downfall of the Ghibellines; or that it roused the hatred of the Guefts to such a degree as to make them sign the decrees of exile against their enemies—a formality which was in those days actually carried out in churches, when they were again in power.

91-93. After the battle of Montaperti all the Ghibelline leaders, save Farinata, recommended that Florence should be rased to the ground, and this would doubtless have been done, but for Farinata's eloquent appeal on behalf of his native city.

107, 108. "Then," that is, after the Last Judgment, when the conception of time is merged in that of eternity.

109. See above, *vv.* 70, 71.

119. Frederick II. (1194-1250) became King of Sicily and Naples in 1197 and Emperor in 1212. Villani says of him (*v.* 1) that "he was addicted to all sensual delights, and led an Epicurean life, taking no account of any other."

120. Cardinal Ottaviano degli Ubaldini (*ca.* 1210-1273), an ardent Ghibelline, is said by Villani to have been the only one of the Papal Court who rejoiced at the issue of Montaperti; and, according to Benvenuto, he is reported to have uttered the words: "If I have a soul, I have lost it a thousand times over for the Ghibellines."

In view of the fact that three of Dante's heretics are Ghibellines, it may be worth mentioning that there is contemporary evidence to prove that adherents of this party were frequently suspected of unorthodox opinions merely because they were opposed to the Pope. Dante's judgment, however, was not swayed by any such considerations, as is shown by his condemnation of the Gueff Cavalcanti.

123. See above, *vv.* 79-81.

130-132. As a matter of fact Beatrice does not herself actually relate Dante's future to him; but it is owing to her words that the poet is induced to ask Cacciaguida to enlighten him as to coming events (see *Par.* xvii. 7, *sqq.*).

CANTO XI

8, 9. There is a confusion here between Pope Anastasius II. (469-498) and his contemporary the Emperor Anastasius (491-518). It is the latter who was induced by Photinus, a deacon of Thessalonica, to adopt the Acacian heresy, which denied the divine birth of Christ.

16-111. The reader is referred to the note on "Dante's Hell."

22. "Malice." It should be noted that in *vv.* 82, 83 of the present canto, Dante classifies the sins under the heads of incontinence, bestiality, and malice. In this verse, however, "malice" includes both bestiality and malice.

51. For Sodom, see *Genesis* xix. Cahors, in the South of France, was so notorious for its usurers in the Middle Ages, that "Caorsinus" was frequently employed as a synonym for "usurer."

60. Barratry means traffic in public offices; it is, in fact, the secular equivalent for simony.

69, 73. The "gulf" and "red town" (*cf. Inf.* viii. 70, *sqq.*) are, of course, the city of Dis.

79-83. See the *Nicomachean Ethics* of Aristotle, vii. 1: "... there are three species of moral character to be avoided, viz., vice, incontinence, and bestiality."

83, 84. See the *Ethics*, vii. 6: "It is more pardonable to follow natural desires. . . . The more treacherous men are the wickeder. . . . Bestiality is a lesser thing than vice."

101. Possibly in allusion to Aristotle's phrase: "... if Art mimics Nature," in the *Physics*, ii. 2.

105. Nature being the connecting link.

106-108. See *Genesis* i. 28: "... replenish the earth and subdue it;" and iii. 19: "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread." If these really are the verses Dante had in mind, he possibly selected the former (for which ii. 15 may be substituted) to represent Nature, and the latter to represent Art, conceiving the one to be addressed to the agriculturist, the other to the artisan.

113-114. The sun was in Aries at the time of the Vision (see *Inf.* i. 38-40, and *note*). As the constellation of Pisces which immediately precedes that of Aries is now on the horizon, the time indicated is about two hours before sunrise (of the second day). At the same hour the position of Charles' Wain, or Boötes, is in the N.W. (Caurus=the N.W. wind).

CANTO XII

4-6. It is best to take this as the landslip known as the Slavini di Marco, on the left bank of the Adige, near Roveredo, between Verona and Trento.

12-18. Pasiphaë, the wife of Minos, King of Crete, became enamoured of a bull, and gave birth to the Minotaur, half-man, half-bull. Minos, whose son Androgeos had been killed by the Athenians, exacted from them an annual tribute of seven youths and seven maidens who were devoured by the brute. It was eventually slain by Theseus, King of Athens, with the aid of Minos' daughter Ariadne, who gave him a sword and the clue wherewith to unravel the labyrinth in which the monster lived.

34, 35. See above, Canto ix. 22-27.

37-41. For the descent of Christ to Hell, see above, Canto iv. 53, *sqq.* The earthquake at the moment of Christ's death is mentioned in *Matthew* xxvii. 51.

42, 43. Empedocles taught that the universe exists by reason of the discord of the elements, and that if harmony (*amor*) were to take the place of this discord, a state of chaos would ensue.

45. See below, Canto xxi. 106, *sqq.*

56. "Centaur," mythological creatures, half-men, half-horses (see *v.* 84).

59-75. Chiron, the teacher of Achilles, Hercules, and other renowned Greeks (*cf. Purg.* ix. 37). For Nessus, see *Par.* ix. 102, *note*. Of Pholus we know nothing save that he is often mentioned by the classical poets; Dante's "full of wrath" is probably a reminiscence of Virgil's *furentem Centaurum* . . . *Pholum* (*Georg.* ii. 455, 456).

107. Probably Alexander the Great is meant, although Dante elsewhere (*Conv.* iv. 11: 124, and *De Mon.* ii. 9: 61-67) eulogises this hero. There are several instances of such inconsistency in our poet's works. Some try to avoid the difficulty by identifying Alexander with the Thessalian tyrant of that name (Alexander of Pherae).

107, 108. Dionysius the Elder, tyrant of Syracuse (B.C. 405-367).

109, 110. Ezzelino III. da Romano (1194-1259), the chief of the Ghibelline party in Northern Italy.

110-112. Obizzo II, da Este, Marquis of Ferrara and of the March of Ancona (1264-1293), was an ardent Gueff. It is doubtful whether his son Azzo VIII. (1293-1308) really murdered him: possibly Dante is only following a popular tradition. Azzo (who is again mentioned in *Purg.* v. 77, and perhaps in *Inf.* xviii. 56, see *note*) is evidently called "stepson" (*figliastro*) with reference to his unnatural crime.

118-120. Simon de Montfort, who led the English barons against their king, Henry III., was defeated and slain by Henry's son, Edward, at the battle of Evesham (1265). The reference here is to Simon's son, Guy, who avenged his father's death in 1271, while Vicar-General of Tuscany, by openly murdering

the English king's nephew, Henry, in a church at Viterbo. Henry's heart was enclosed in a casket, which was placed on a pillar over London Bridge, or, according to another account, in the hand of his statue in Westminster Abbey.

132. Cf. v. 103. Note that the tyrants are punished more severely than even the murderers.

134-138. Attila, King of the Huns (433-453), known as the *flagellum Dei* (see the following canto, v. 149, note).

135. This may be Pyrrhus, the son of Achilles, who took part in the Trojan War, killed Priam and his son Polites, and sacrificed his daughter Polyxena to the shade of Achilles; Virgil lays special stress on his cruelty (*Aen.* ii. 469, *sqq.*). Or perhaps the reference is to the fabled descendant of this Pyrrhus, the King of Epirus (B.C. 318-272), who was eventually defeated by the Romans (cf. *Par.* vi. 44); the fact that Dante (in the *De Mon.* ii. 10: 57-83) speaks of Pyrrhus' contempt for gold does not affect the validity of this interpretation: in the first place for the reason given above in the note to v. 107, and secondly because contempt for gold is not incompatible with great violence and cruelty.

Sextus Pompeius, the son of Pompey the Great, was defeated by Caesar at Munda, B.C. 45 (cf. *Par.* vi. 71, 72). Lucan and Orosius give him a very bad character.

137. These notorious highwaymen were contemporaries of Dante.

CANTO XIII

8. The river Cecina and the Marte, on whose banks stands the town of Corneto, indicate the northern and southern boundaries of the marshy coast district of the Maremma in Tuscany.

10-12. In the third book of the *Aeneid* (209 *sqq.*), Virgil narrates how, on the islands of the Strophades, the Harpies defile the viands of the Trojans, who attack the hideous birds. One of these, Celaeno (*infelix vates*), prophesies the misfortunes that will befall the Trojans and how they will endure famine before attaining their goal.

35. The speaker is Pier delle Vigne (ca. 1190-1249) minister of the Emperor Frederick II, and Chancellor of the two Sicilies. In the latter capacity he re-arranged all the laws of the kingdom. Till the year 1247 he enjoyed the utmost confidence of his master. But suddenly he fell into disgrace (the reason usually given being that he plotted with Pope Innocent IV. against Frederick); he was blinded and imprisoned and eventually committed suicide. Pier's Latin letters are of great interest, and his Italian poems neither better nor worse than the rest of the poetry of the Sicilian school.

48. See *Aen.* iii. 22, *sqq.* The episode of Aeneas and Polydorus evidently served Dante as a model for the present passage.

58-61. When at the height of his power, Pier was often compared to his namesake, the Apostle Peter. This explains the reminiscence of *Matthew* xvi. 19 in these verses, the "keys" being, of course, the keys of punishment and mercy.

64. The "harlot" is Envy (see v. 78).

103. See above, Canto vi. 97-99.

115-129. Giacomo da Sant' Andrea, of Padua, was notorious for the extraordinary way in which he wasted his own and other people's substance, one of the favourite methods he employed being arson. He appears to have been put to death by Ezzelino da Romano in 1239.

Lano, a Siennese, was another spendthrift (cf. *Inf.* xxix. 125-132, note). Having squandered his fortune, he courted death at a ford called Pieve del Toppe (near Arezzo), where the Siennese were defeated by the Aretines in 1288.

133. This speaker has not been identified, though Benvenuto gives the names of some Florentines who hanged themselves about this time.

143-150. In Pagan times the patron of Florence was Mars, but when the Florentines were converted to Christianity they built a church in the place of the temple that had been raised in his honour, and dedicated it to St. John the Baptist. The statue of Mars was first stowed away in a tower near the Arno, into which river it fell when the city was destroyed by Attila (whom Dante, following a common error of the time, confounds with Totila). It was subsequently re-erected on the Ponte Vecchio, though in a mutilated state; but for this circumstance, so the superstition ran, the Florentines would never have succeeded in rebuilding the city. As it was, they attributed the unceasing strife within their walls to the offended dignity of the heathen God (see *Par.* xvi. 145-147).

CANTO XIV

14, 15. The Libyan desert traversed by Cato of Utica, when he led the Pompeian army to effect a junction with Juba, King of Numidia, in the year B.C. 47. The march is described by Lucan, *Phars.* ix. 411, *sqq.*

22-24. The blasphemers, usurers, and Sodomites respectively.

31-36. These details are taken from an apocryphal letter, very popular in the Middle Ages, in which Alexander is supposed to send an account of the marvels of India to Aristotle. The original narrative says that the soldiers trampled on the snow, and that they warded off the flames, which subsequently descended from the sky, by means of their garments. The discrepancy we note in Dante occurs already in a version of the episode given by Albertus Magnus in his *De Meteoris*, which must, accordingly, have been Dante's immediate source.

46. "That spirit great." Capaneus, whose defiance of the gods, especially of Jupiter, at the siege of Thebes, is narrated by Statius in a passage (*Thebaid* x.) from which Dante borrowed several details.

51-59. When Jupiter hurled a thunderbolt at Capaneus, before the walls of Thebes, the king did not fall, but met his death standing. Mongibello=Mount Etna, in which Vulcan and the Cyclopes forged Jove's thunderbolts. At the battle of Phlegra the giants who attempted to storm Olympus were defeated and slain by Jupiter.

77. "Rivulet." This is a kind of tributary of the Phlegethon (*cf. Inf.* xii. 47 and 101, and see below *vv.* 133, 134).

79-81. The Bulicame was a noted spring near Viterbo. The fact that its waters were sulphurous and of a reddish colour makes the comparison specially appropriate. An edict has been unearthed which shows that a portion of the waters was reserved in the manner indicated by Dante as late as the year 1469.

96. The Golden Age, under Saturn, the mythical King of Crete.

100-102. It having been prophesied to Saturn, Rhea's husband, that he would be dethroned by one of his children, he devoured each one as soon as it was born. To save Jupiter from this fate, Rhea retired to Mount Ida, duped Saturn with a stone wrapped up in swaddling clothes, which he duly swallowed, and as a further precaution, bade the Corybantes make such an uproar that the child's cries could not be heard.

105-115. This figure, the primary conception of which is based on *Daniel* ii. 32, *sqq.*, is an allegory of the history of the human race. The four metals are the four ages of man, as then reckoned (*cf. Ovid, Metam.* i. etc., etc.). The iron foot and that of clay are generally explained as the secular and spiritual authority, respectively; the latter, according to Dante's view, having, since the "donation of Constantine" (see *Par.* xx. 55-60, *note*), always been the more

powerful (*v.* 111). The old man stands in Crete, partly, perhaps, on account of the central position of this island, situated midway between Asia, Africa, and Europe; but principally because of Virgil's verses (*Aen.* iii. 104, 105): *Crete Jovis magni medio jacet insula ponto, Mons Idaeus ubi, et gentis cunabula nostrae*—"our race" being, of course, the Trojans, who were regarded by Dante as the ancestors of the Romans (*cf. Inf.* ii. 17-21, *note*). Damietta, in Egypt, stands for the Eastern civilisation, which was superseded by that of Rome (*cf. Par.* vi. 1-3). The Golden Age alone gave no cause for tears (*vv.* 112, 113).

119. For Cocytus see below, Cantos xxxii. to xxxiv.

136-138. In the Terrestrial Paradise, see *Purg.* xxviii. 25, *sqq.*

CANTO XV

4. Bruges, about ten miles from the sea, and Wissant, between Calais and Cape Grisnez, roughly indicate the western and eastern limits of the coast-line of Flanders (as then constituted).

7-9. In the Middle Ages the Duchy of Chiarentana or Carinthia extended as far as the Paduan district, the inhabitants of which built dykes to protect themselves against the waters of the Brenta, when swollen by the melted snows of the Carnic Alps.

23. Brunetto Latini or Latino (*ca.* 1210-1294), a Florentine Gueff and one of the leading figures in the political life of his native town. As an author, his fame rests on two works written between 1262 and 1266, the *Livre dou Tresor*, a prose encyclopaedia composed in French (see verse 119), and the *Tesoretto*, a popular didactic poem in Italian, which contains in a condensed form much of the matter of the larger work. Dante was well acquainted with both these compilations, but was specially indebted to the latter, which is in the form of an allegorical journey. It is absurd to regard Latini as a kind of schoolmaster: he was far too busy a man in other walks of life. Verse 85 should obviously be taken in the widest sense; and there can be no doubt that Dante's thought was largely moulded and directed by his illustrious friend.

61-79. According to tradition, Catiline was besieged by Caesar in Fiesole, the Roman *Faesulae*, situated on a hill three miles N.W. of the future site of Florence. When the town fell, a new city was founded on the Arno, Florence, to wit. The inhabitants were composed partly of the Fiesolans, and partly of the remnants of the Roman army. The Florentine commons (Whites) were commonly held to be descended from the former stock, the nobles (Blacks) from the latter. These two strains were always at variance: hence there was unceasing internal strife at Florence. In *v.* 63 Dante ingeniously utilises the "mountain" on which Fiesole stood, and the "rock" of the Fiesolan quarries, with which a great part of Florence was built, to indicate the rough and hard nature of his fellow-citizens. Verses 71 and 72 have usually been taken to mean that both the Blacks and the Whites would be eager to win over to their side a man of Dante's calibre; but in view of the actual historical facts, which are summarised by Dante in *Par.* xvii. 69, it is perhaps better to adopt Casini's interpretation, that both parties would vie with each other in persecuting the poet—the Blacks with their decrees of exile (after he opposed the entry of Charles of Valois, which is probably the act specially referred to in *v.* 64—see Gardner, pp. 21, 22), and the Whites with their hatred, caused by his defection from their party. The Florentines are called "blind" (*v.* 67) either because they thoughtlessly opened their gates to Attila, or because, in the year 1117, they lost some booty that was due to them, owing to an ingenious trick played them by the Pisans. Verse 68 may be compared with *Inf.* vi. 74.

89. "With another text." See *Inf.* x. 79, *sqq.*, and 130-132, *note*.

95, 96. Dame Fortune's varying moods affect him as little as the act of the peasant.

109. It is an insult to Dante to assume that he condemns Priscian merely because, as a grammarian and teacher of youth, he was specially liable to fall into the vice here condemned. There must have been some medieval tradition to account for Priscian's position in this circle.

110. Francesco d'Accorso (1225-1293) the son of a great jurist, and himself a lawyer of distinction, lectured at Bologna and at Oxford.

110-114. Andrea dei Mozzi belonged to a wealthy and influential Florentine family, who were White Guelphs. He was Bishop of Florence from 1287 till the year 1295, when he was translated to the See of Vicenza (on the Bacchiglione) by Boniface VIII. (*servus servorum Dei* being one of the official styles of the Popes, from the time of Gregory I.).

122. This race was run on the first Sunday in Lent, the prize being a piece of green cloth.

CANTO XVI

18. The haste to do them reverence.

28. "Soft," because of the sand.

37-42. According to a romantic story, Guido Guerra IV. married Gualdrada at the instigation of the Emperor Otto IV., whom she had given a striking proof of her chaste disposition. Their grandson was, contrary to the family tradition, a zealous Guelph, who, having served his party faithfully from 1250 to 1266, was appointed Vicar of Tuscany by Charles of Anjou, and held this post till his death (1272).—In one of the most notable events of his career he was associated with Tegghiaio Aldobrandi (a powerful Guelph of the Adimari family, for which see *Inf.* viii. 34, note). Before the expedition against the Sieneze, which resulted in the disastrous defeat of the Guelphs at Montaperti (1260) Tegghiaio acted as the spokesman of the Guelph nobles (headed by Guido Guerra) who voted against the expedition, knowing that the enemy had been reinforced by German mercenaries (see Villani vi. 77).—Verses 41, 42 should perhaps be rendered: "... whose words [of advice] should have been accepted in the world above."

44. Jacopo Rusticucci, a Florentine of lowly origin whose savage-tempered wife appears to have been partly responsible for his present position.

70. Little is known of this personage, save that he appears to have been a purse-maker, who exchanged his trade for a life of social pleasure.

84. "I was," namely—in the world below.

94-102. "The stream," the Montone, which (under the name of Acquacheta) rises in the Etruscan Alps, and flows past Forlì and Ravenna into the Adriatic, was, in Dante's time, the first river, rising in those parts, that did not flow into the Po. (Now the Lamone would answer this description).—Monte Viso (v. 95) is a peak of the Cottian Alps in Piedmont where the Po rises. If the "where" of v. 102 refers to the monastery known as San Benedetto in Alpe and standing on a hill bearing the same name (v. 100), Dante would mean that the foundation was able to support many more monks than actually were supported by it. But the monastery appears always to have been in want of money; so it is better to adopt Boccaccio's explanation that the allusion is to a castle and settlement which the Conti Guidi contemplated building for their vassals on this spot.

106-114. The symbolism here would be quite clear, if we could credit Buti's statement that Dante joined the Franciscans in his youth; but unfortunately the story has every appearance of having been fabricated for the purpose of elucidating this passage. References to *Isaiah* xi. 5 and 6 do not help us much.

On the other hand, there can be no doubt that the leopard of *Inf.* i. 31, 32, and 42 stands for Luxury, that the cord was the symbol of an order noted for the severity of its rule, and that Dante, having just witnessed the tortures inflicted on the luxurious, might be expected henceforth to lead a life of purity without any further reminder. It is not necessary to carry the symbolism further. Virgil, having need of something to attract Geryon's attention, uses the cord merely because it has now become superfluous, and because he has nothing else at hand.

131. This is Geryon, in classical mythology a King of Spain, who was slain by Hercules for the sake of his oxen. His position as guardian of the fraudulent is accounted for by the medieval tradition, according to which he enticed strangers into his power and stealthily killed them. Virgil (*Aen.* viii. 202) and other classical poets speak of Geryon as a monster with three bodies; but Dante's description is based rather on *Rev.* ix. 7, 10, 19.

CANTO XVII

18. For Arachne see *Purg.* xii. 43-45.

21, 22. The beaver is gradually being driven northwards: in Dante's time it appears to have been found principally in Germany, and now it is more common in Sweden and Norway. Natural histories teach us that the beaver is a vegetable feeder; so that the idea implied in these lines, and probably taken from some medieval Bestiary, that it uses its tail for catching fish, is a fallacy.

59, 60. The arms of the Florentine Gianfigliuzzi, who belonged to the faction of the Black Guelfs.

62, 63. The arms of the Florentine Ubriachi, a Ghibelline family.

64. Rinaldo de' Scrovegni of Padua.

68. Another Paduan, Vitaliano de' Vitaliani.

72. The Florentine Messer Giovanni Buiamonte de' Bicci.

106-108. Phaëton, the son of Phoebus Apollo, in order to prove his parentage, which had been doubted, asked his father to let him drive the chariot of the sun for one day. The request was granted, but Phaëton was too weak to hold in the chargers, scorched a portion of the Heavens and almost set the Earth on fire. To save the latter from destruction, Jupiter put a stop to Phaëton's erratic course by killing him with a thunderbolt (*cf. Par.* xvii. 1-3). The Pythagoreans explained the Milky Way as being due to Phaëton's misadventure (*cf. Conv.* ii. 15: 45-55).

109-111. Icarus attempted to fly with the help of a pair of wings supplied him by his father Daedalus, but was drowned owing to his approaching too near the sun, which melted the wax with which the wings were fastened (*cf. Par.* viii. 116).

CANTO XVIII

1. *Malebolge*, literally, Evil Pouches.

6. See below, Canto xxxii. 1, *sqq.*

28-33. The first Jubilee of the Roman Church was instituted by Boniface VIII. in the year 1300. The *ponte* is the bridge of Castello Sant' Angelo, so-called from the castle that stood at one end of it, while the *monte* is either Mt. Janiculum, or, more probably, the Monte Giordano.

40-63. Venedico de' Caccianemici, whose father, Alberto, was head of the Guelfs of Bologna. In politics he adhered to the family tradition and was a follower of the Marquis of Este, being finally exiled from his native city (1289).

His sister's seducer was either Obizzo II. or Azzo VIII. of Este (see above, Canto xii. 110-112, *note*); probably the former, as Ghisola eventually married a certain Niccolò da Fontana in 1270, and Azzo did not succeed to the Marquisate till 1293. In v. 57, Dante alludes to the fact that several versions of the story had got abroad, according to one of which Venedico was innocent.

There are two local touches in this passage. The word "salts" (*salse*, pickling, v. 51), is evidently selected with reference to the Salse, a ravine near Bologna into which the bodies of criminals were thrown; and *sipa=sia* (in v. 60), is the Bolognese equivalent for the affirmative particle *sì*. The Savena flows two miles to the west, and the Reno two miles to the east of Bologna.

83-96. Jason is in this circle first, for having, on his way to Colchis, seduced Hypsipyle, the daughter of King Thoas of Lemnos, whose life she had managed to save, when the Lemnian women put all their males to death (v. 93); and secondly, for having abandoned Medea, the daughter of King Aëtes of Colchis, whom he married as a reward for having enabled him (v. 86, *per senno*) to carry off the Golden Fleece, but whom he subsequently deserted for Creusa.

116. Little is known of Alessio de' Interminelli, save that his family were prominent Whites of Lucca, and that he was still alive in the year 1295.

129-135. At the beginning of the third act of Terence's *Eunuchus*, Thraso asks his servant Gnatho, with reference to a slave he had sent to Thais: *Magnas vero agere gratias Thais mihi?*—whereupon Gnatho answers: *Ingentes*. It should be noted that Dante holds Thais responsible for the messenger's reply, and that his knowledge of the passage is evidently derived from the *De Amicitia* (§ 38) of Cicero, who quotes it as a typical instance of flattery, with the remark that the proper answer would have been *magnas*, rather than *ingentes*.

CANTO XIX

1. Simon of Samaria who was rebuked by St. Peter for thinking that the "gift of God may be purchased with money" (see *Acts* viii. 9-24). The Simonists or Simoniacs—those guilty of trafficking in spiritual offices—derive their name from him.

16-21. The font in the Baptistry of Florence was surrounded by holes in which the officiating priest stood, so as to be free from the pressure of the crowd. Dante once broke the marble round one of these holes, to save the life of a boy who had got wedged into it; and he uses the present opportunity to free himself from certain charges (probably of sacrilege) that were levied against him at the time.

31. This is Nicholas III. of the Orsini family (see vv. 70, 71) who occupied the Papal See from 1277 till 1280.

49-51. According to Florentine law, hired assassins were executed by being planted, head downwards, in a hole in the earth which was then filled up again.

52. Note the ingenuity with which Dante assigns Boniface VIII. (born ca. 1217, Pope 1294-1303) his place in Hell, though he survived the date of the Vision by three and a half years (see *Purg.* xx. 85-90, *note*).

54. "The writing," the book of the future (*cf. Inf.* x. 100, *sqq.*, and *Par.* xv. 50).

57. "The lady fair," the Church, according to the allegory of the *Song of Solomon*.

79-84. Nicholas had held the uppermost position among the simoniacal Popes in Hell for twenty years (1280-1300), but Boniface will occupy it for a period of eleven years only—from his death in 1303, till the death of Clement V. in 1314. The latter, Bertrand de Got, Archbishop of Bordeaux, was elected Pope in 1305, through the influence of Philip the Fair of France. It was he who transferred the Papal See to Avignon, where it remained till 1377 (*cf. Par.* xxx. 142-148).

85-87. Jason induced Antiochus Epiphanes, by means of bribes, to make him high priest and to permit the introduction of pagan customs (see 2 *Maccabees* iv. 7, *sqq.*); similarly, Clement abused his high office in return for the good services Philip had done him.

93. See *Matthew* iv. 19, *John* xxi. 19.

94-96. See *Acts* i. 13-26; the *anima ria* is, of course, Judas.

98-99. Charles of Anjou having refused to let his nephew marry a niece of Nicholas, the latter turned against him, and, having been bribed by the Emperor Palaeologus (who feared Charles's designs on the Eastern Empire), assisted John of Procida in his conspiracy against the House of Anjou, which culminated in the Sicilian Vespers (1282). Some modern historians, regarding all this as legend, and pointing to the fact that Nicholas died two years before the Vespers, prefer to take the "money got so ill" as the tithes which Nicholas employed to carry out his plans against Charles. But the former seems the more satisfactory interpretation.

106-111. For "the great whore that sitteth upon many waters," see *Revelation* xvii. The "seven heads" are explained as the seven virtues or the seven sacraments, and the "ten horns" as the ten commandments, which were kept while the occupants of the Holy See were virtuous.

115-117. See *Par.* xx. 58-60, *note*.

CANTO XX

9. "Litanies," the processions in which the litanies are chanted.

31-39. For Amphiaraus, the prophet of Argos, see *Par.* iv. 103, 104, *note*.

40-45. This story of the Theban soothsayer Tiresias (the father of Manto) is told by Ovid, *Metam.* iii.

46-51. Aruns, the Etruscan soothsayer, prophesied the civil war which ended in the victory of Caesar and the death of Pompey (Lucan, *Phars.* i. 584-638).—For Luni, see *Par.* xvi. 73, *note*.

55-93. Dante makes Virgil in this passage give an account of the foundation of Mantua that differs considerably from the version given in *Aen.* x. 198-200. This is no slip as is shown by *vv.* 97-99. On the other hand it certainly is a slip (and one which it is futile to attempt to account for), that Manto should here be placed among the soothsayers, while in *Purg.* xxii. 113, she is referred to as being in Limbo.

59. Referring either to the tyrannous rule which Thebes (the birthplace of Bacchus) had to endure under Cleon, or to the capture of that city by the Epigoni.

63-78. *Benaco*, now known as Lago di Garda; the Val Camonica, is a valley some fifty miles long in North-East Lombardy; Mount Apennino is probably a spur of the Rhaetian Alps, above Gargnano; Garda is a town on the east side of the lake; the "place" of *v.* 67 is either the little island dei Frati, some miles south of Sali, or the mouth of the river Tignaglia, near Campione; the fortress of Peschiera, at the south-east extremity of the lake, was raised by the Veronese, as a defence against the people of Brescia and Bergamo; Governo is the modern Governolo, on the right bank of the Mincio, about 12 miles from Mantua.

94-96. In 1272, the Brescian Counts of Casalodi made themselves masters of Mantua, but were very unpopular and threatened with expulsion. Pinamonte de Buonaccorsi, who was anxious to become lord of Mantua himself, advised Albert of Casalodi to banish all the nobles of importance, representing to him that they were the chief source of danger. Then he put himself at the head of the populace, massacred all the families of note that remained, and expelled the Count, retaining the lordship of the city till 1291.

106-114. At the time of the Trojan war, all the Greeks were absent from their country, taking part in the siege of Troy. Before the Greeks left Aulis, Calchas advised Agamemnon to sacrifice Iphigenia. But Eurypylos had nothing to do with this incident, which Dante appears to have confused with the passage in which Virgil tells how both Eurypylos and Calchas are consulted with reference to the departure of the Greeks from Troy (*Aen.* ii. 110, *sqq.*)—For the use of the word "Tragedy" (v. 112) see *De Vulg. El.* ii. 4: 38—*Per tragediam superiorem stilum inducimus*; [*per comediam inferiorem*, etc.]; see also *Epist. ad Can. Grand.* x. 10.

116. Michael Scott of Balwearie (ca. 1190-1250) studied at Oxford, Paris, and Toledo; he followed the Emperor Frederick II. to his court, but died in Scotland. In philosophy proper he appears to have figured only as a translator, e.g. of Aristotle; his original work deals with the occult sciences. For further particulars see Scott's Note O to the *Lay of the Last Minstrel*.

118-119. Guido Bonatti of Forlì, tiler and astrologer, author of a *Liber introductorius ad Judicia Stellarum* (written ca. 1270). He acted as the private astrologer of Guido da Montefeltro (see *Inf.* xxvii.) and is credited with a share in his victory over the French Papal forces at Forlì in 1282 (see *Inf.* xxvii. 44).

Asdente, a shoemaker of Parma, who was noted as a soothsayer in the second half of the 13th century. In *Conv.* iv. 16: 65-71, Dante says that Asdente would be noble, if notoriety were tantamount to nobility.

124-129. "Cain and his thorns"—the moon (see *Par.* ii. 51, *note*). The "Pillars of Hercules" were regarded by Dante and his contemporaries as the extreme western limit of the world, and he designates this boundary variously as Spain, Gades, the Iberus, Morocco, or Seville, as here, (see *Par.* xxvii. 83, 84, *note*). During the night preceding Good Friday, the moon (which guided Dante's steps in the dark wood, see above, Canto i.) was at full. The poet is now describing the setting of the moon (or rising of the sun) on the Saturday morning, which, for reasons given in the chronological note, may be timed as having taken place at 6.52.

CANTO XXI

37. "Malebranche"—Evil Claws.

38. "San Zita"—Lucca, of which city Zita (who died ca. 1275 and was canonised by Nicholas III.) was the patron saint. Buti says this alderman was a certain Martino Bottaio, and that he died in 1300.

41. Bonturo Dati was head of the popular party of Lucca at this time, and surpassed all his fellow-townsmen in barratry.

47. The "sacred face" was an ancient wooden image of Christ, preserved in the church of San Martino, and invoked by the inhabitants in their hour of need.

48. The Serchio flows a few miles north of Lucca.

58. Note that Dante is more terrified in this circle of the barrators, and has more cause for alarm than anywhere else in the Inferno. It would almost seem as though the demons are intended by the poet to recall his Florentine enemies, who persecuted and exiled him on the strength of false charges of barratry. The names afford no clue; unless, indeed, we may connect the *rana* of *Inf.* xxiii. 6 with Ranieri di Zaccaria, who signed the decree of November 6, 1315.

94-96. In August 1289 the Tuscan Guefs captured the Pisan fortress of Caprona. We may assume that Dante actually took part in this operation: for the opening lines of the following canto point conclusively to his having been present at the continuation of the same campaign in the Aretine territory; and from Bruni we learn that he fought at the battle of Campaldino (*Purg.* v. 92) earlier in the same year.

112-114. In *Conv.* iv. 23: 103-110 Dante says that Jesus died at noon. It is, therefore, now seven o'clock of the morning following Good Friday. For the earthquake, see above, Canto xii. 37-41, and *note*.

CANTO XXII

1-9. See note to *vv.* 94-96 of the preceding canto. Each Italian city had its *carroccio*—a car which was used as a kind of rallying-point in battle, and provided with a bell (*v.* 7).

19-21. This is evidently a popular belief of Dante's time, and is referred to, for example, in Giamboni's Italian version of Latini's *Tresor*.

32. This is a certain Ciampolo, so the early commentators say, without adding anything to the facts given by Dante. The King Tebaldo of *v.* 52 is Teobaldo II. (Thibaut V., Count of Champagne), King of Navarre (1253-1270).

67-79, 81-87. Gomita was a Sardinian friar in the service of Nino Visconti of Pisa (see *Purg.* viii.), judge of Gallura. [The Pisans, to whom Sardinia belonged at this time, divided the island into four judicial districts: Gallura is in the north-east.] His acts of barratry were overlooked, till Nino discovered that the friar was favouring the escape of certain prisoners; whereupon he had him hanged.—"The other side" (*v.* 67), *i.e.* in Sardinia.

88, 89. Enzo, the natural son of Frederick II., who made him King of Sardinia, married Adelasia di Torres, mistress of Logodoro (north-west of Sardinia) and Gallura. Being called to Italy by the wars of his house, he appointed Michel Zanche his Vicar in Logodoro. Enzo was captured by the Bolognese in 1249, and remained their prisoner till his death (1271). In the meantime, Adelasia obtained a divorce and married Michel, who governed the provinces till he was murdered by his son-in-law, Branca d'Oria, about the year 1290 (see *Inf.* xxxiii. 134-147).

CANTO XXIII

4-6. A frog having offered to carry a mouse across a piece of water, tied it to its leg; but when they got half-way, the frog treacherously dived and the mouse was drowned. Suddenly a kite swooped down and devoured both of them. This fable is not to be found in the original Aesop, but is contained, with slight variations, in most of the medieval collections of fables that went under his name. In one of these versions, as Mr. Paget Toynbee points out, the mouse escapes, and this may have been the form of the story known to Dante, whose Ciampolo (=the mouse) escapes, too, though of course, only for a time. Dante's Alichino=the frog, and his Calcabrina=the kite.

7. Literally, the two Italian words used both mean "now."

66. Frederick II. punished those guilty of treason by having them fastened in cloaks of lead which were then melted over a fire.

103-108. Catalano de' Catalani, or de' Malavolti (*ca.* 1210-1285), a Guelph of Bologna, and Loderingo degli Andolò, a Ghibelline of the same city, were in 1266 jointly appointed to the office of Podestà of Florence, as it was thought that two outsiders, belonging to different factions, would be likely to rule impartially. The *Gardingo*, that portion of Florence now occupied by the Piazza di Firenze, was the site of the palace of the Uberti, which was destroyed in 1266 during a popular rising against the Ghibellines.—*Frati Gaudenti* was the nick-name given to the *Ordo militiae beatae Mariae*, founded at Bologna in 1261, with the approval of Urban IV. The objects of the Order were praiseworthy (reconciliation of enemies, protection of the weak, etc.), but the rules were so lax that it soon had to be disbanded.

111-123. The words of the high priest Caiaphas at the Council were: "Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not" (*John* xii. 49, 50). For the father-in-law of Caiaphas see *John* xviii. 13.

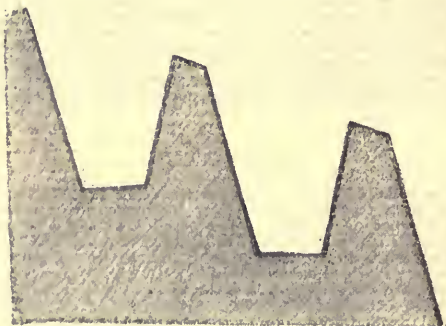
140, 141. For Malacoda's falsehood see above, Canto xxi, 111.

CANTO XXIV

1-3. When the sun is in Aquarius, *i.e.* between January 21st and February 21st, he is more in evidence in proportion as the days and nights become more and more equal. This is the usual explanation of these verses. But there is much to be said for Butler's interpretation (based on the *Ottimo*) which takes "nights" as the point of the heavens opposite the sun (*cf.* *Purg.* ii. 4), and "half the day" as "the south": when "the nights are already passing away to the south," the sun is, of course, proceeding northwards.

4-6. Hoar-frost melts sooner than snow.

34, 35, and 40. The following diagram (taken from Scartazzini) will make these verses clear:—



85-90. The serpents in these verses were suggested by Lucan (*Phars.* ix. 708 sqq., and 805). The country referred to in v. 90 is Arabia.

93. The heliotrope (a stone) was credited with the power of making its wearer invisible.

107-111. The peculiarities of the phoenix are alluded to by many classical and medieval writers; Dante's immediate source was evidently Ovid, *Melam.* xv. 392, sqq.

112-117. Dante would appear to be describing an epileptic fit.

137-139. In 1293 Vanni Fucci, a Black of Pistoia, robbed the treasure of San Jacopo in the Church of San Zeno, together with two accomplices. The real culprits remained undetected for a year; but in the meantime, a certain Rampino de' Foresi was suspected of the theft and detained in prison.

143-150. The Bianchi, having assisted in the expulsion of the Neri from Pistoia (May 1301), were themselves driven from Florence in November 1301, when Charles of Valois entered the city. For some time Pistoia remained the stronghold of the Whites. Verses 145-150 probably refer to the capture, in 1302, of Serravalle (near Pistoia: Campo Piceno is the tract between Serravalle and Montecatini) by the Florentine and Lucchese Guelphs, under Moroello Malaspina (the "vapour") lord of Lunigiana (the Macra rises in the N. extremity of Lunigiana). For Moroello see *Purg.* viii. 109-139, *note*.

CANTO XXV

2, 3. This obscene and insulting gesture, the origin of which has been variously explained, was made by inserting the thumb between the index and middle finger.

12. "Seed." Pistoia was said to have been founded by the remnants of Catiline's army.

15. Referring to Capaneus, for whom see above, Canto xiv. 46, *sqq.*

25-33. Cacus was a monster inhabiting a cave in Mount Aventine and noted for his thefts. He dragged into his cave, by their tails, some of the oxen that Hercules had stolen from Geryon, and was slain by that hero. In the mode of his death Dante follows Livy's account (i. 7), but in other respects Virgil (*Aen.* viii. 193-267) served as his model. Cacus was not really a Centaur: Dante was evidently led astray by Virgil's . . . *semihominis Caci*. Verse 28 refers, of course, to the Centaurs guarding the Violent (see above Canto xii.).

35-151. The five noble Florentines punished in this circle are (a) the "three spirits" of v. 35: Agnello of the Brunelleschi, a Ghibelline family; Buoso degli Abati, or, perhaps, de' Donati (if the latter is intended, he is identical with the Buoso mentioned in *Inf.* xxx. 44); and Puccio Sciancato ("the Lame") de' Galigai; (b) Cianfa de' Donati (the "serpent" of v. 50), who is merged with Agnello; (c) Francesco de' Cavalcanti (the "little serpent" of v. 82), who assumes Buoso's human shape, while Buoso becomes a serpent. He was slain by the people of Gaville (a village in the upper Val d' Arno), the murderers being summarily dealt with by his kinsmen (v. 151).

94-97. Sabellus and Nasidius, two soldiers of Cato's army, who, in their march across the Libyan desert, were stung by serpents, with the result that the former was reduced to a kind of puddle, while the latter swelled to such a size that his coat of mail gave way (*Lucan, Pharsalia*, ix. 763, *sqq.*, 790, *sqq.*). The transformations of Cadmus and Arethusa are narrated by Ovid in *Metam.* iv. 563, *sqq.*, and v. 572, *sqq.*

CANTO XXVI

9. *Prato*, probably the Cardinal Nicholas of Prato, who was, in 1304, sent to Florence by Benedict XI. to endeavour to reconcile the hostile factions. His efforts proving futile, he laid the city under an interdict; and several local disasters that occurred shortly after, such as the fall of a bridge and a great conflagration, were attributed to the curse of the Church. This interpretation is better than taking Prato as the town ten miles N.W. of Florence: for this place appears to have been on friendly terms with Florence.

26, 27. In the summer-time, when the days are longest.

34-39. Elisha, having seen Elijah carried up to heaven in a chariot of fire, was mocked by little children, who were devoured by bears, as a punishment for having scoffed at him (2 *Kings* ii. 11, 12, 23, 24).

53, 54. Eteocles and Polynices, sons of Oedipus, King of Thebes, quarrelled over the succession to the throne. This dispute gave rise to the war of the

Seven against Thebes, in the course of which the brothers slew each other in single combat. Their hatred continued after death, for, according to Statius (*Thebaid* xii, 429, *sqq.*), the very flame of their funeral pyre was divided.

55-63. The Wooden Horse, in which were concealed the Greeks who opened the gates of Troy to their countrymen, thus raising the siege and causing Aeneas and his followers to leave the city (*v.* 60).—Deidamia, daughter of Lycomedes, King of Scyros, at whose court Thetis had left her son Achilles in female disguise, to prevent his taking part in the expedition against Troy (see *Purg.* ix. 34, *sqq.*). After Deidamia had become enamoured of Achilles and borne him a son, Ulysses discovered the hero's secret and induced him to sail for Troy, whereupon Deidamia died of grief.—The Palladium, a statue of Pallas, was stolen by Ulysses because the fortunes of Troy were supposed to depend on it.—Ulysses and Diomed are, of course, the Greek heroes who fought against Troy.

73-75. There can be no doubt that Dante was ignorant of Greek and that his knowledge of everything relating to Greece was derived from intermediate Latin sources, principally Virgil. Perhaps this is the meaning these verses are intended to convey.

91-92. Gaeta, a town in S. Italy, N. of Campania, thus named by Aeneas after his nurse, Caieta (*Aen.* vii. 1-4). For Circe, see *Purg.* xiv. 42, *note*.

94-96. The name of Ulysses' father was Laertes, that of his wife Penelope, and that of his son Telemachus.

100-142. This account of Ulysses' voyage is entirely of Dante's invention. The "columns of Hercules" (*i.e.* Mt. Abyla in N. Africa and Mt. Calpe=Gibraltar), mentioned in verses 107, 108, were regarded as the W. limit of the habitable world. Verses 127-129 indicate that the ship had crossed the equator. The "mountain" of *v.* 133 can be no other than the Mount of Purgatory.

CANTO XXVII

4. This is Guido, Count of Montefeltro (1223-1298), who became head of the Ghibellines of Romagna in 1274, and worked untiringly for the cause.

7-12. The brazen bull was designed by Perillus for Phalaris, the Sicilian tyrant. The shrieks of those being roasted inside it were intended to remind the bystanders of the roaring of a bull. Perillus was the first on whom the machine was tested.

21. These are the words referred to in verse 3 of the present canto.

29, 30. Montefeltro is between Urbino and Mt. Coronaro.

40-42. Ravenna was in 1300 ruled by Guido Minore, or Vecchio. The family arms contained an eagle. Cervia is about twelve miles S. of Ravenna.

43-45. In 1282, Forlì was successfully defended by the Guido who is now being addressed against the French troops led by John of Appia, Count of Romagna, and sent at the instigation of Pope Martin IV. In 1300 the city was under the rule of Sinibaldo degli Ordelaffi, whose arms consisted of a green lion.

46-48. Malatesta and his son Malatestino of Rimini (Verrucchio=the castle inhabited by the lords of Rimini) are called hounds on account of their cruelty. Montagna de' Parcitati, head of the Ghibellines of Rimini, was taken prisoner by the father (1295) and put to death by the son.

49-51. Mainardo Pagano, Lord of Faenza (on the Lamone), of Imola (near the Santerno) and of Forlì, whose arms were "on a field argent a lion azure," was a Ghibelline in the north but supported the Guelfs in Florence. He died in 1302 (see *Purg.* xiv. 118, 119).

52-54. Cesena (between Forlì and Rimini at the foot of the Apennines) was ruled by Captains or Podestà about this time; but in 1314 Malatestino of Rimini became lord of the town.

67. About the year 1292, Guido became reconciled to the Pope, and in 1296 he entered the Franciscan order. This accounts for S. Francis' intercession on his behalf (see below *v.* 112).

85-111. The long-standing feud between Boniface VIII. and the Colonna family came to a head in 1297. The latter retired to the stronghold of Pene-strino, now Palestrina, some twenty-five miles E. of Rome (the *Lateran* of *v.* 86; cf. *Par.* xxxi. 35, 36, *note*). Guido, who was the Pope's adviser in this campaign, counselled that an amnesty should be offered them (*v.* 111); but when the Colonnese surrendered on these conditions (Sept. 1298) their stronghold was razed to the ground. Verses 94, 95 refer to the legend that Pope Sylvester (314-335) was summoned from his hiding-place in Mt. Soracte by the Emperor Constantine, whom he converted to Christianity and then cured of his leprosy. The "predecessor" of *v.* 105 is Pope Celestine V., for whom see *Inf.* iii. 60, *note*.—Acre (*v.* 89), which had belonged to the Christians for a hundred years, was retaken by the Saracens in 1291.

112-129. Compare the very similar passage, *Purg.* v. 100, *sqq.*, relating to Guido's son Buonconte.

CANTO XXVIII

7-18. The following wars and battles, all of which took place in Apulia, are alluded to in these verses: (a) The wars of the Romans (descended from the Trojans) against the Samnites, B.C. 343-290. (b) The Punic wars (B.C. 264-146), in the second of which was decided the battle of Cannae (B.C. 216), where so many Romans fell that, as Livy tells (xxiii. 11, 12), Hannibal was able to produce before the senate at Carthage three bushels of gold rings taken from their bodies (cf. *Conv.* iv. 5: 165-168). (c) From 1059 till 1080 Robert Guiscard (for whom cf. *Par.* xviii. 48) opposed the Greeks and Saracens in S. Italy and in Sicily. (d) The Apulian barons, to whom Manfred had entrusted the pass of Ceperano (on the Liris), turned traitors, and allowed Charles of Anjou to advance, thus paving the way for Manfred's defeat at Benevento (1266). (e) At the battle of Tagliacozzo (1268), Charles overthrew Manfred's nephew, Conradin, by a stratagem. The latter was gaining the day and engaged in pursuing the enemy, when Charles turned the tables on him, with the aid of a number of troops whom he had, following the advice of Erard de Valéry, held in reserve for this purpose.

22-63. When Mohammed (*ca.* 570-632) died, his son-in-law Ali (born *ca.* 597) did not immediately succeed him, but allowed three of the other disciples of the prophet to take precedence. He himself occupied the Caliphate from 656 till his assassination in 661.

55-60. Fra Dolcino became head of the sect of the Apostolic Brothers on the death of its founder Segarelli in 1300. These people appear to have merely desired to restore the Church to the purity of Apostolic times, but they were accused of holding various heretical doctrines, such as the community of goods and women. In 1305 Clement V. ordered the extirpation of the sect, and a crusade was preached against them. They retired to the hills between Novara and Vercelli, but were eventually forced to surrender. Dolcino and the beautiful Margaret of Trent, who was generally held to be his mistress, were burnt at Vercelli in June 1307.

64-75. Pier della Medicina, belonged to the Biancucci family, who were lords of Medicina (about 20 miles E. of Bologna). He was deprived by Frederick II. of a praetorship he held, and his family were driven from Romagna in 1287. He then turned his attention to intriguing among the rulers of Romagna and was chiefly successful in setting the houses of Polenta and Malatesta against each other; his method being to make each of them suspicious of the other's designs. The towns of Vercelli and Marcabò are used to designate the W. and E. extremities of the old Romagna.

76-90. Malatestino of Rimini, desiring to add Fano to his dominions, invited Angiolello da Carignano and Guido del Cassero, two of the principal men of the town, to a conference at La Cattolica (on the Adriatic, between Fano and Rimini), and had them treacherously drowned off the headland of Focara (between Fano and La Cattolica). The latter was so notorious for the strong winds sweeping round it, that the sailors used to offer up prayers to ensure a safe passage. The "Argive race" are mentioned in *v.* 84 perhaps with reference to the Argonauts.

94-102. According to Lucan it was Curio who advised Caesar to cross the Rubicon (near Rimini), by which act the latter declared war against the republic (*B.C.* 49). At that time the stream formed the boundary between Italy and Cisalpine Gaul. Verses 98 and 99 are translated from Lucan's *semper nocuit differre paratis* (*Phars.* i, 281).

103-109. For Mosca, see *Par.* xvi. 145-147, *note*. The murder of Buondelmonte was the origin of the Gueff and Ghibelline factions in Florence.

118-142. Bertran de Born (*ca.* 1140-1215), Lord of Hautefort, near Périgord (see the following canto, *v.* 29), the greater part of whose life was spent in feudal warfare, and who ended his days in the Cistercian monastery of Dalon, near Hautefort. He was one of the most individual of the Provençal troubadours, his finest poem being a song of lamentation on the death of the "Young King" (the name given to Prince Henry, son of Henry II. of England, because he was twice crowned during his father's lifetime). The King's refusal to yield the sovereignty of England or Normandy to his son caused the outbreak of hostilities, which lasted till the latter's death in 1183. Dante's idea of the part played by Bertran in this strife was apparently derived from the early Provençal biographies of the poet.—Verses 137, 138, refer, of course, to Absalom's conspiracy against his father David and to the counsel he received from Ahithophel (see 2 *Sam.* xv.-xvii.).

CANTO XXIX

9. See the note to *vv.* 86, 87 of the following canto.

10. It is now about one o'clock on the Saturday afternoon.

18-36. Geri del Bello, the cousin of Dante's father. According to one account, he caused discord among the Sacchetti and was slain by a member of that family in consequence, his death not being avenged till thirty years later, when his nephews killed one of the Sacchetti. Buti says that the murder of Geri's father was the origin of the feud.

46, 48. Valdichiana and Maremma are selected as two of the most unhealthy districts of Tuscany, Sardinia being notorious for the same reason.

58-64. The inhabitants of the island of Aegina having died of a pestilence sent by Juno, Jupiter restored the population by transforming the ants into men, who were called Myrmidons (*cf.* Ovid, *Metam.* vii. 523-657).

109-120. Griffolino of Arezzo obtained money from Albergo of Siena by pretending that he could teach him the art of flying. On discovering that he had been tricked, Albergo induced his father or patron, who was Bishop of Siena, to have Griffolino burned as an alchemist.

125-132. These four men were members of the *Brigata Spendereccia*, a club founded in the second half of the thirteenth century by twelve wealthy Siennese youths, who vied with each other in squandering their money on riotous living. Verse 127 refers to some expensive dish prepared with cloves, as to the nature of which the old commentators are not agreed. The "garden" of *v.* 128 is probably Siena. The Lano mentioned in *Inf.* xiii. 120, also belonged to this "Spendthrift Brigade."

136-139. Capocchio was probably a Florentine and a friend of Dante's. In order to explain *v.* 139, the early commentators give anecdotes vouching for his skill as a draughtsman and his powers of mimicry. He was burnt at Siena in 1293, for practising alchemy.

CANTO XXX

1-12. Semele, the daughter of Cadmus, King of Thebes, was beloved by Jupiter, to whom she bore a son, Bacchus; whereupon Juno wreaked her vengeance on the Theban royal house in several ways. Two of these are recorded by Ovid in the *Metam.* iii.; while the madness of Athamas, the husband of Semele's sister Ino, is narrated in *vv.* 512-530 of the fourth book.

13-21. After the fall of Troy, Hecuba, the wife of King Priam, was carried off as a slave to Greece. On the way thither, the sacrifice of her daughter and the sight of her son's murdered body drove her mad (*Metam.* xiii. 404-475).

22-45. Gianni Schicchi, a Florentine of the Cavalcanti family, well-known for his mimicry. On the death of Buoso Donati (see above, Canto xxv. 140), his son Simone induced Gianni to personate the dead man and dictate a will in his favour. In doing this, Gianni added several clauses by which he himself benefited, and thus obtained, among other things, a beautiful mare, known as the "Lady of the company." The story of Myrrha is told by Ovid, *Metam.* x. 298, *sqq.*

49-90. Master Adam of Brescia was induced by the Conti Guidi of Romena to counterfeit the Florentine golden florin, for which crime he was burnt in the year 1281.—The *fonte Branda* of *v.* 78 is either a well-known fountain at Siena, or a more obscure one near Romena. (With *v.* 65, *cf.* *Purg.* v. 85-129, *note.*)

86, 87. Attempts have been made to obtain the exact measurement of Dante's Hell, by calculations based on this passage, and on *v.* 9 of the preceding canto; but it is evident that Dante did not aim at any uniformity of design. The bank leading down to the tenth *bolgia* must have been of considerable depth; but those leading to the second and sixth *bolgie* were evidently quite short descents (see above, Cantos xviii. 109-114, and xxiii. 31-45). In the same way, we have here in the tenth *bolgia*, a half-mile bottom, while in the fifth *bolgia*, the fiends on either bank can, apparently, touch hooks with one another (xxii. 145-151). See *Purg.* xiii. 22, *note.*

97-98. For Potiphar's wife, see *Genesis* xxxix. 6-23.—Sinon is the Greek who allowed the Trojans to take him prisoner, and then persuaded them to admit the Wooden Horse within their city walls (*cf.* *Aen.* ii. 57, *sqq.*, and see above, Canto xxvi. 55-63, *note.*)

128. "Narcissus' Mirror" = water.

CANTO XXXI

16-18. In the course of the battle of Roncesvalles, when the Saracens were gaining the day, Roland sounded his horn, so as to induce Charlemagne, who was eight miles away, to return to the aid of the Christians; and he sounded it with such violence, that, as the Old French *Chanson de Roland* says, *Parmi la buche en salt fors li clers sancs, De sun cervel la temple en est rumpant*. The Emperor heard it, but was misled by the advice of the traitor Ganelon, and gave no heed to his nephew's call.

40. Monteregegioni is a castle that belonged to the Sieneze, and is situated about eight miles N.W. of their city; the wall surrounding it is surmounted by twelve turrets.

46-81. Nimrod, the reputed builder of the Tower of Babel (*Genesis* x. 8-10 and xi.). There is, of course, no Biblical tradition as to his having been a giant.

52-57. Elephants and whales are less dangerous, not being endowed with reason.

59. The bronze cone-pine, which, in Dante's time, stood in front of St. Peter's, is about seven and a half feet high.

67. In view of Dante's express statement in *v.* 81, it is absurd to attempt the interpretation of this line.

84-96. Ephialtes and his brother Otus, the sons of Neptune, warred against the Olympian Gods, and attempted to pile Ossa on Olympus and Pelion on Ossa, but were slain by Apollo.

99. Briarëus was another of the giants who defied the Gods of Olympus. Virgil (*Aen.* x. 565-568) describes him as having a hundred arms and fifty heads, and Statius (*Theb.* ii. 596) speaks of him as *immensus*.

100-102, 115-132. Antaeus is unfettered because he held aloof from the strife against the Gods. Dante has borrowed the details concerning him from Lucan's *Phars.* iv. 593-660. Hercules, having discovered that Antaeus lost his strength when his body did not touch the earth, lifted him in the air and crushed him. The exploit of the lions took place near Zama, where Scipio defeated Hannibal.—Tityos and Typhon (*v.* 124) were two giants, who, having incurred the wrath of Jupiter, were hurled into Tartarus (which was held to be beneath Mt. Aetna, *cf. Par.* viii. 67-70).

136-138. The Carisenda is a leaning tower at Bologna.

CANTO XXXII

11, 12. Amphion, aided by the Muses, played the lyre with such charm that he drew from Mount Cithaeron the stones which, placing themselves of their own accord, formed the walls of Thebes.

28, 29. Tambernica is apparently a mountain in the E. of Slavonia, while Pietrapana is a peak probably identical with the ancient Pietra Apuana in N.W. Tuscany.

32, 33. That is to say, in summer-time.

41-60. Alessandro and Napoleone, the sons of Count Alberto degli Alberti (whose possessions included Vernia and Cerbaia in the Val di Bisenzio), quarrelled over their inheritance and killed each other.

61, 62. Mordred having done his utmost to usurp the dominion of his father, King Arthur, the latter determined to kill him. He pierced his body with a lance, and, in the words of the Old French romance, "after the withdrawal of the lance there passed through the wound a ray of sun so manifest that Girflet saw it." Thereupon Mordred, feeling that he had received his death wound, slew his father.

63. Focaccia, one of the Cancellieri of Pistoia, appears to have been largely responsible for the feud which broke out in that family, in the course of which many of the kinsmen, who were divided into Neri and Bianchi, slew each other. The aid of Florence was invoked, with the result that the Black and White factions were introduced into that city, too.

63-66. Sassol Mascheroni, one of the Florentine Toschi, killed his nephew (or, according to other accounts, his brother) so as to obtain the inheritance.

67-69. Camicion de' Pazzi slew his kinsman Ubertino, with whom he had certain interests in common.

In 1302 Carlino de' Pazzi was holding the castle of Piantravigne in the Valdarno for the Whites of Florence against the Blacks of that city and the Lucchese; but, having been bribed, he treacherously surrendered it to the enemy.

88. According to medieval tradition (as preserved for example in the *Dictys Cretensis*, the *Dares Phrygius* and the later *Roman de Troie*) it was the Trojan Antenor who betrayed his city to the Greeks.

73-111. The defeat of the Florentine Guelfs at Montaperti (see above, Canto x. 85, 86, *note*), was largely due to the fact that Bocca degli Abbati, who, though a Ghibelline, was fighting on the Gueft side, at a critical moment cut off the hand of the Florentine standard-bearer.

113-117. When Charles of Anjou began his campaign against Manfred in 1266, he entered Parma without any opposition, although Manfred had made arrangements for his force to be resisted. This omission was generally held to be due to the treachery of the leader of the Cremonese, Buoso da Duera, who was accused of having been bribed by the French.

119, 120. Tesauro de' Beccheria of Pavia, Abbot of Vallombrosa and Legate of Alexander IV. in Florence, was put to death for plotting against the Guelfs, after the Ghibellines had been expelled from the city in 1258.

121. Gianni de' Soldanier, though a Ghibelline, became the leader of the Gueft commons of Florence, when, after the defeat of Manfred at Benevento (1266), they rebelled against the government of Guido Novello and the Ghibelline nobles.

122, 123. For Ganelon see *note* to *vv.* 16-18 of the preceding canto.—The Ghibelline Lambertazzi, a Bolognese family that had taken refuge in Faenza, were, in 1280, put to the sword by their enemies the Geremei, a Gueft family of Bologna. This was brought about by the treachery of a certain Tribaldello (or Tebaldello), one of the Zambrasi of Faenza, who had a spite against the Lambertazzi, and opened the city gates to their enemies.

130, 131. Though Tydeus had been mortally wounded by Menalippus, in the war of the Seven against Thebes, he still managed to kill his opponent; whose head having been brought to him, he set to gnawing the skull, in a frenzy of rage. The incident is related by Statius in the eighth book of the *Thebaid*.

CANTO XXXIII

1-90. In 1288 the Guelfs were paramount in Pisa, but they were divided into two parties, led by Ugolino della Gherardesca and by his grandson, Nino de' Visconti (for whom see *Purg.* viii.), respectively. The head of the Ghibellines was the Archbishop of the city, Ruggieri degli Ubaldini. In order to obtain supreme authority, Ugolino intrigued with Ruggieri, and succeeded in expelling Nino. He was, however, in his turn betrayed by the Archbishop who, seeing that the Guelfs were weakened, had Ugolino and four of his sons and grandsons imprisoned. When Guido of Montefeltro took command of the Pisan forces in March of the following year, 1289, the keys of the prison were thrown into the river and the captives left to starve.

28, 29. The Monte di S. Giuliano.

32. Leading Ghibelline families of Pisa.

38. "Sons." Of Ugolino's four companions, only two were actually his sons—Gaddo and Uguccione; Nino and Anselmuccio being his grandsons.

75. This verse has given rise to much controversy. The meaning obviously is, not that Ugolino was forced by the pangs of hunger to feed on the bodies, but that hunger brought about his death.

82. The islands of Caprara and Gorgona, N.W. of Elba and S.W. of Livorno respectively, were at that time under the dominion of Pisa.

85, 86. In 1284, after the defeat of the Pisans by the Genoese at Meloria, Ugolino yielded certain castles to the Florentines and Lucchese. Some hold that his motives were loyal, and that his only object was to pacify these enemies of Pisa. But Dante evidently knew more of the circumstances. Besides, if the

Count is atoning his treachery against Nino rather than this action, how does he come to be in Antenora?

88. Dante often alludes to the stories of bloodshed, hate, and vengeance for which Thebes was notorious (see above Cantos xxvi. 52, *sq.*, xxx. 1, *sqq.*, etc., etc.).

91. The name of this division is almost certainly derived from Ptolemy, the captain of Jericho, who "inviteth Simon and two of his sons into his castle, and there treacherously murdereth them" (1 *Maccabees* xvi. 11-17).

106. See the following canto, *vv.* 46-51.

109-157. In a dispute relating to the lordship of Faenza, Alberigo, a member of the Manfredi family and one of the *Frati Gaudenti*, was struck by his younger brother, Manfred (1284). Alberigo pretended to forget all about this, but in the following year he invited Manfred and his son to a banquet, and, at a given signal (namely the words "Bring the fruit"), they were both murdered. "The evil fruit of Friar Alberigo" passed into a proverb, to which *v.* 119 probably refers.

Atropos (*v.* 126)—the Fate that severs the thread of life.

Branca d'Oria, member of a famous Ghibelline family of Genoa, aided by a nephew, murdered his father-in-law, Michel Zanche (for whom see above, Canto xxii.), at a banquet to which he had invited him.

CANTO XXXIV

1. This is a parody of the first line of a Latin hymn by Fortunatus (6th century)—*Vexilla regis prodeunt*. The advancing standards are the wings of Lucifer.

37-45. The red, yellow, and black faces have been variously explained. The best interpretation seems to be the one which makes them representative of hatred, impotence, and ignorance—the qualities opposed to those of the Holy Trinity.

55-67. These three archsinners betrayed, in the persons of their lords and benefactors, the two most august representatives of Church and State—the founder of Christianity and the founder of the Roman Empire. The other sinners in Giudecca are not specified save in a general way (see above, *v.* 11, *sqq.*).

68, 69. It is now about six o'clock on the Saturday evening.

96. See the chronological note, p. 236. "Tierce" was the first of the four canonical divisions of the day, and would, at the equinox, last from six till nine; "mid-tierce" is therefore equivalent to half-past seven.

112, 113. The northern hemisphere was held to be covered with land, the southern with water.

121-126. This passage has generally been taken to establish a connection between the cone of the Mount of Purgatory and the funnel of Hell. It is obvious, however, that Hell was in existence ready to receive Satan, and that the "empty space" of *v.* 126 and the "tomb" of *v.* 128 refer not to Hell, but to the cavern into which the nether bulk of Satan is thrust.

130. The "streamlet" is Lethe (see *Purg.* xxviii. 25, *sqq.*), which bears the memory of sin from Purgatory down to the place of sin in Hell.

139. The word "star," with which each of the three *cantiche* closes, indicates the constant aspiration of the poem, and of the soul whose journey it depicts, towards the highest things.

H. O.

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